ANCIENT INDIAN CHRONOLOGY

ILLUSTRATING
SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT
ASTRONOMICAL METHODS

BY

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PREFACE

I published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters, in the years 1938 and 1939, the following five papers.—

(i) Some Astronomical References from the Mahābhārata and their Significance in Vol III, No 10

(ii) Bhārata-Battle Traditions
(iii) Solstice Days in Vedic Literature
(iv) Madhu-vidyā or the Science of Spring
(v) When Indra became Maghavān
} Published in Vol IV, Nos 15-18

The last four of the above papers were kindly communicated to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal by Prof. M N. Saha, F R S, who had found in these papers methods and results in Ancient Indian Chronology which deserved encouragement It was at his suggestion that I submitted to the authorities of the Calcutta University, in a letter dated the 23rd August, 1939, a scheme for publication of a research work on Indian Chronology. The University very kindly sanctioned my scheme in their Minutes of the Syndicate, dated the 30th September, 1939, and appointed Mr. Nirmalchandra Lahiri, M A, to assist me in my research work Under the very favourable conditions thus created by the University I took up work under the scheme from Nov, 1939, which was finished by July, 1941 in the form of the present work named "Ancient Indian Chronology."

The five papers mentioned above formed the nucleus of the present work The last four of the above-named papers were noticed in the famous British Science Journal, "Nature" in Vol 145, Jan., 6, 1940, in the Section of "Research Items," under the caption, "Some Indian Origins on the light of Astronomical Evidence" which is quoted at the end of this work

I have carried on the researches embodied in the present work in the spirit of a sincere truth seeker If I have been led by any bias my critics will kindly correct me and point

out the same to me I have not hesitated to reject some of my former findings when further study and new light received therefrom justified such action I trust my work will be continued by other Indian researchers in the same line in future

I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the works of the late Prof Jacobi[1], Tilak[2] and Dīksita[3] on Vedic Chronology To the works of Tilak and Dīksita I am indebted for many references from the Vedas, but in many cases my interpretation has been different from theirs

I have also to acknowledge with thanks the sympathy and help with which I was received by Mm Vidhuśekhara Śāstrī, late Asutosh Professor of Sanskrit, Calcutta University and his colleague Mm Sītārāma Śāstrī, whenever I approached them as to the correct interpretation of Vedic passages To Prof Dr. M N Saha, F.R S , I am indebted for constant encouragement and help in the matter of making many books accessible to me and for many helpful discusssions and criticisms I have to express my thanks to the authorities of the Calcutta University, and specially to Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M A , B L , D Litt , Bar.-at-Law, M L A., late President of the Council of Post-Graduate Teaching in Arts, for creating this facility for me to carry on my researches

Finally I have to pay my tribute of respect to the memory of the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, the inspirer and organiser of research studies at the Calcutta University, and of the late Maharaja Sir Manindrachandra Nandi, K C I E., of Cossimbazar, the donor of the fund created for Research work in Indian Astronomy, from which was met the major expenses in carrying out the researches.

Calcutta, October, 1947. P C SENGUPTA.

1 "On the Date of the Rgveda '—Indian Antiquary, Vol xxiii, pp 154 169

2 "The Orion" by B G Tilak, Poona

3 भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र by S B Dīksita, Poona

INTRODUCTION

The word 'chronology' meant apparent dating only, from the 16th century of the Christian era. The word has now come to mean 'the science of computing and adjusting time and periods of time, and also of recording and arranging events in order of time, it means computation of time and assignation of events to their correct dates "[1] In the present work, it is the science of Astronomy alone that has been brought into requisition in ascertaining the dates of past history of the Hindus, both of the Vedic and of later times. The data for dates arrived at from 4170 B.C to 625 B C have been derived from the sources which are either of the Vedic or post-Vedic Sanskrit literature. In the section on the Indian eras, they have been derived chiefly from the archaeological sources.

Now, chronology is based on the interpretation that we may put to any statement which is derived either from the literary or epigraphic sources Whether the interpretations accepted in the present work are justifiable, is a point that is to be decided by the author's critics So far as he is concerned he has this satisfaction that he could not find any better interpretations than what he has accepted of the astronomical references which he could discover and use for the present work It is made up of the following sections, *viz*, the Date of Bhārata Battle, the Vedic Antiquity, Brāhmana Chronology, and on the Indian Eras It has not been possible to ascertain any dates from any other *Śrauta Sūtras* excepting those of

[1] The New English Dictionary

Baudhāyana, Kātyāyana and Āpastamba. The *Gṛhya Sūtras* do not present any new indication of dates.

The results of the findings may be briefly stated thus — The date of the Bhārata Battle has been proved to have been the year 2449 B C., so far as evidences can be discovered from the Sanskrit literature, no other date for the event is now possible The antiquity of the Ṛgvedà as shown in the chapters of the book extend from 4000 B C to perhaps 2450 B C. The Atharva Veda indications also point to dates from 4000 B C. to about 2350 B C , *viz.*, the time of Janamejaya Pārikṣita, while the different sections of the Yajur-veda show a range of dates beginning from about 2450 B C

As to the *Brāhmanas* and *Śrauta Sūtras*, they are books on rituals only and as such they cannot belong to the same antiquity as the Vedas themselves, more specially the Ṛg-veda The range of dates obtained for this type of works extends from about 1625 B C to about 630 B.C So far as my studies go, the *Yajurveda* itself is more or less a *Brāhmana* or a work on rituals. The *Brāhmaṇas* as a rule record the traditional days for beginning the sacrifices which indicate the earliest date of about 3550 B C Such statements, however, cannot give us the dates of the *Brāhmanas* which record them.

The *Śrauta Sūtras* generally are crude followers of earlier rules as to the beginning of the year, the same remarks are applicable to all the *Gṛhya Sūtras*. The *Jyautisa Vedāngas* indicate a date of about 1400 B C. In the section of the Indian Eras, it has been shown that the Buddha's Nirvāna era should be dated at 544 B C , if the eclipses spoken of in the *Samyukta Nikāya* can be held as real events happening in the Buddha's life time It has also been shown that the zero year of the early Kharosthī inscriptions, should be taken as the year 305 B C , the era itself may be called that of Selukus Nikator, the zero year

of the later Kharosthī inscriptions or of Kaniska's era was 80 A.D.; while of the current Śaka era the Zero year is 77-78 A.D. It has been shown in the chapter on the *Samvat* or Mālava era, that it was started from 57 B C. which is reckoned as the year 1 of this era. An attempt has been made to show why the years of this era are called Kita years. The Zero year of the Gupta era should definitely be taken as the year 319 A.D. or 319-20 A D., or the Saka year 241 as recorded by Alberūnī. The date of Kālidāsa has been ascertained as the middle of the sixth century of the Christian era. The modern *Rāmāyana* may be dated about a hundred years earlier than the time of Kālidāsa.

One point that I specially want to emphasise is this.— The date of a book may be much later than the date of an event which it records The Rāma story is certainly much older than the time of the Pāndavas, but the modern work *Rāmāyana* cannot be dated earlier than about 450 A.D The date of the Bhārata Battle is 2449 B C., but the book, the present *Mahābhārata* must be dated about 400-300 B C The Vedic antiquity runs up to 4000 B.C, but the date when the Rgveda was written in the form in which we get it now, must be dated much later. To ascertain this later date is perhaps not possible. The points to be settled are (1) When did the present highly scientific Indian alphabet come into being? (2) What alphabet was in use amongst the Hindus for recording their Vedic songs and other literature? (3) What were the earliest vocal forms of the words used in the Vedas? We therefore conclude that the antiquity of the Vedic culture is one thing while the date of the present Rgveda is another, the date of the Bhārata Battle is one thing while the date of the modern Mahābhārata is another, the date of Rāma or the Rāma story is one thing while the date of the modern Rāmāyana, is another. The present work has thus principally aimed at ascertaining

the dates of the events and of cultural traditions, but it is hoped that the findings in some cases have led to the year of the books concerned

As to the antiquity of the Indian scientific alphabet, it can be traced to Yāska's Nirukta and to the Grammar of Pānini Yāska and Pānini are names of *rsis* in the *Baudhāyana Srauta Sūtra* If the date from recorded tradition for this work can be correctly assumed as about 900 B C, the dates of the lexicon maker and of the grammarian would be about 1000 B C If, however, the date of the Baudhāyana needs a lowering by about 350 years, there would be corresponding lowering of the dates of Pānini and Yāska

Of the dates ascertained, the following dates, *viz*, (*a*) 3928 B C, 26th of July, for the solar eclipse as spoken of in the Rg-veda and (*b*) 2449 B C, for the year of the Bhārata battle do not admit of any raising or lowering according to my interpretation of the astronomical references on which they are based In this range which is practically the same as between 4000 B C to 2450 B C, the Rg-veda was developed—I mean the *sūktas* or songs were composed and transferred to successive generations by word of mouth principally We cannot be sure of the art of writing was developed in this period Even if we assume that some sort of writing was invented in this period, the alphabet used could not be the same as the most scientific Indian alphabet as we have it now [1] In all epigraphic evidences from the

[1] Prof K C Chatterjee of the Allahabad University is of opinion that the following *rc*, *viz*,—

उतत्व पश्यन्नददर्श वाच-
मुतत्व, शृण्वन्नशृणोत्येनां
उतोत्व स्मै तन्वं विसस्रे
जायेव पत्यऽउशती सुवासाः ॥ M X 71, 4

"One (man) indeed seeing speech has not seen her, another (man) hearing her has not heard her, but to another she delivers her person as a loving wife well-attired presents herself to her husband '—(Wilson) shows (Poona Orientalist, Vol I, No 4, p 47 ff) that the art of writing was known in Vedic times

Asokan period up to the most recent times it is the same alphabet that is used, only the forms of the letters are different, we have either the Brāhmī or the Kharosthī or some other forms of the letters The question naturally rises (1) was there the existence in India of a different alphabet with different forms before the Brāhmī alphabet with its forms was invented ? (2) does the modern Indian alphabet truly represent the sounds of the original Vedic words ? As for instance, we now read ऋक्समम् as *Rksamam*, राष्ट्रम् as *Rāstram* etc. The question raised can be ascertained only by epigraphic evidences that may be discovered in future

Date of the Bhārata Battle and the Vedic Antiquity

It has been said above that the Rgveda assumed its modern size from about the year 2450 B C, time of the Pāndavas It is known to all Vedic scholars that Āngirasa Krsna was the author of the four *sūktas* or hymns, *viz*, M. VIII, 63, M X, 42-44 of the *Ṛgveda.* In the *Chāndogya Upanisat,*[1] we have it that Devakīputra Krsna was a pupil of Ghora Āngirasa It appears that the Mahābhārata hero Kṛṣna himself, may probably be the author of the above-mentioned four *sūktas* of the *Rgveda* We read in the *Mahābhārata* that the four *Sārngakas* who saved themselves from the conflagration of the Khāndava forests by their prayers to Agni, the god of fire, are named *Jaritāri, Drona, Sārisrkka* and *Stambamitra* The same *Sārngakas* appear to be the authors of the *sūkta* in the Rg-Veda, M X, 142 Again Turakāvaseya[2] the priest of Janamejaya Pāriksita was very probably the son of Kavasa. Kavasa[3] was formerly a Śūdra by caste but attained the honoured position of a Brāhmana in life This Kavasa was the author of the

1 Chāndogya Upanisat, III, 17 6
2 Aitareya Brāhmana, Ch 39, 7
3 Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, Ch 8, 1.

sūktas or hymns in the Rg-Veda, M X, 30-34 All these considerations lead us to conclude that the latest portions of the Rg-Veda were composed at the time of the Pāndavas (2449 B C), when according to tradition the Vedas were subdivided into *Rk, Sāma* ahd *Yajus,* and the author of this division was Vyāsa the common ancestor of the Kauravas and the Pāndavas The *Atharva Veda,* in my opinion, records traditions which are as old as of the Rg-Veda itself, as may be seen from Chapters VIII, X and XI As this *Veda (Atharva)* says अयनं मघामे [1] or "that the (southerly) course is at the *Maghās* in my time" and जनः स भद्रमेधति राष्ट्रे राज्ञः परिक्षितः [2] or "that man prospers well in the kingdom of Pariksita," I understand that the time indicated is between 2449 to 2350 B C Thus according to the evidences cited above, the Atharva Veda also was completed about the time of the Pāndavas

Vedic Antiquity and the Indus Valley civilisation

In the Rg-Veda we get the following references to the *Śiśnadevas*:—

(*a*) M. VII, 21, 5 —

न या तवऽइन्द्र जुजुर्नो न वन्दना शविष्ठ वेद्याभिः ।
सशर्धदर्यो विषुणस्य जन्तोर्मा शिश्नदेवाऽअपि गुर्ऋतं नः ॥

"Let not the Rāksasas, Indra, do us harm let not the evil spirits do harm to our progeny, most powerful Indra, let the sovereign lord (Indra), exert himself (in the restraint of) disorderly beings, so that the unchaste (*Śiśna-devas*) may not disturb our rite." (Wilson)

(*b*) M X, 99, 3 —

स वाजंयातापदुष्पदा यन्त्स्वर्षातापरिषत् सनिष्यन् ।
अनर्वायच्छतदुरस्य वेदो घ्नन्शिश्नदेवाँऽअभिवर्पसाभूत् ॥

[1] Atharva Veda, XIX 7, 2
[2] *Ibid*, XX, 127, 10

"Going to the battle, marching with easy gait, desiring the spoil, he set himself to the acquisition of all wealth Invincible, destroying the Phallus-worshippers (शिश्नदेवान्), he won by his prowess whatever wealth (was concealed) in the city with hundred gates" (Wilson)

It appears that these Phallic-worshippers were a rich people living in large cities, which were raided by the worshippers of Indra and other Vedic gods and carried away a rich booty These *Śiśnadevas* were probably the same who founded the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa and lived also in the land of the seven rivers (the Punjab)

In the *Mahābhārata* again we have many references which show that *Rākṣasas*, the *Asuras* and the Aryan Hindus had their Kingdoms side by side. In the *Vana parva* or the Book III of the *Mahābhārata*, Chapters 13-22 give us a description of the destruction of the *Saubha Purī* by Kṛṣṇa This may mean the destruction of a city like Mohenjo-daro I mention the above references with which I came across in my chronological survey of the Vedas and the Mahābhārata They have been noticed by others before me, but furnish no data for any chronological finding by astronomical methods

Date of Rāma or Rāma Story

In the present work it has been ascertained that the date of the Bhārata battle is 2449 B.C It may now be asked "is it possible to find the time of Rāma astronomically?" The answer I have to give is a definite "no." If the Purānic dynastic lists may at all be thought reliable, in the *Vāyu Purāna* (chapter 88), we have, between Rāma and Bṛhad-vala, a reckoning of 28 generations till the Bhārata battle, and the *Matsya Purāna* (chapter 12) records 14 generations only, while the *Viṣṇu Purāna* records 33 generations between Rāma and Bṛhadvala. If we put any faith in the

Vāyu list the time of Rāma becomes about 700 years prior to the date of the Bhārata battle, *i e*, about 3150 B C

It may be asked why have I not attacked the problem of finding Rāma's time from the horoscope of his birth time given in the modern *Rāmāyana*? The problem was dealt with before me by Bentley in the year 1823 A.D and his finding is that Rāma was born on the 6th of April, 961 B C [1]—a result which is totally unreliable

(1) The 12 signs of the Zodiac spoken of in the *Rāmāyana* in this connection, were not introduced in Indian astronomy before 400 A D

(2) The places of exaltation of the planets were settled only when the *Yavana* astrology came to India of which also the date can hardly be prior to 400 A.D.

(3) Bentley's finding also does not give us the positions of Jupiter and Mars as stated in the *Rāmāyana* reference

(4) The *Rāmāyana* statement of Rāma's horoscope is inconsistent in itself Five planets cannot be in their places of exaltation under the circumstances mentioned therein, as the sun cannot be assumed to have been in the sign *Aries*. This ought to be clear to any astrologer of the present time

(5) Bentley has not established a cycle for the repetition of the celestial positions, or has not even shown that his was a unique finding Even then, as stated before, his finding is not satisfactory, and admitted as such by himself

(6) Further the discovery in India of the seven 'planets' could not have taken place within the truly Vedic period, *i.e.*, from 4000 B C to 2500 B C.

[1] Bentley's Hindu Astronomy, page 13 L D Swami Kannu Pillai in his work "An Indian Ephemeris," pp 112 120, having assumed that in Rāma's horoscope, the sun was in Aries, moon in Taurus, Mars in Capricorn, Jupiter in Cancer and Saturn in Libra, arrived at the year 961 B C, and the date as March 31 of the year This is also impossible as calculations are based on the S Siddhānta He also believes that Rāma's horoscope was unreal

In the Vedic time only four of the 'planets' were discovered, *viz*, the sun, moon, Jupiter and also perhaps Venus. The planet Venus was very probably known by the names Venā,[1] Vena[2] or the Daughter of Sun (*i e.*, सूर्यस्य दुहिता[3] or सूर्या[4]) who was married to Moon, and the Aśvins carried her in their own car to the groom. At the time of the Bhārata battle, however, we find that Saturn was discovered and named but confounded with Jupiter. Mars is called a 'cruel planet' but not given a name. Even Mercury is named as the "son of Moon." (*vide* pages 30-32). When in later times[5] (*i e*, later than 400 A D, probably), the sacrifices to the 'nine planets' were instituted, the appropriate verses selected for offering libations to these 'planets' were *rcas* (1) "आ कृष्णेन, etc", for the sacrifice to the sun from the Rgveda, (2) "आप्यायस्व, etc", for the sacrifice to the moon and it is sacred to the moon or soma, (3) "अग्निर्मूर्धा दिवः, etc.", for Mars, which is sacred to Agni or fire-god, (4) "अग्नेर्विवस्वदुषसः, etc", for Mercury, which is also sacred to Agni, (5) "बृहस्पते परिदीया रथेन, etc", for Jupiter which is sacred to Jupiter, (6) शुक्रं ते अन्यत्, etc", for oblations to Venus and this is sacred to *Pūsan*, (7) "शन्नो देवी, etc.", for oblations to saturn, but the *rc* itself is sacred to the water goddess, (8) "कया नश्चित्र, etc.", for oblations to the ascending node, and which is sacred to Indra and (9) "केतुं कृण्वन् for the descending node's oblation and is also sacred to Indra. It is thus clear that the appropriate *rcas* for oblations to Sun, Moon and Jupiter only could be found from the Vedas; as to the rest of the 'planets' the suitable *rcas* for offering oblations to them, could not be found out from the same source.

Thus in the truly Vedic period there is no evidence forthcoming which would show that the 'planets Mercury, Mars, Saturn and the Moon's nodes were discovered.' Late

[1] M I, 14, 2 [2] M X 8 23, 1 [3] M I, 116, 17
[4] X, 47, 8 13 [5] Matsya Purāna, Chapter, 93

Mr S B Dikshita's finding on this point is also the same as mine and the reader is referred to his great work भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र, pp 63-66. (1st Edn)

Hence the conclusion is inevitable that when we meet with a statement like the above as to the horoscope of the birth time of Rāma or of Krsna, we can never believe it. It is a mere waste of energy to try to find the date of birth of Rāma or of Krsna from such a statement, which is tantamount to saying that "whenever a great man is born four or five planets must be in their exalted positions" In scientific Chronology such "poeto-astrological effusions" cannot have any place

If we want to find the time of Rāma or of Krsna, we have to depend on a well established date of the Bhārata battle, and then from *Purānic* or other evidences try to find these times. We have already said that if the *Purānic* dynastic list can be believed, the time of Rāma should be about 3150 B C

Date of Krsna's Birth

Similarly if we believe in the statement that Krsna was born on the last quarter of Śrāvana, on which the moon was conjoined with the *Rohini* (*Aldebaran*), [1] then using the further condition that the Bhārata battle was fought in 2449 B.C , we can show that Krsna was born on July 21, 2501 B C. For on this day at G M N or 5-8 P.M Kuruksetra mean time —

Mean Sun=98°21′49″	Thus—
,, Moon=359°51′16″	Apparent Sun=96°23′
Lunar Perigee=222°31′53″	,, Moon=4°50′
A Node=33°52′44″	*Aldebaran*=7°33′
Sun's Apogee=26°10′ 48″	
Sun's eccentricity= 01834612	

[1] अष्टमी रोहिणीयुक्ता निशार्धे दृश्यते यदि ।
मुख्यकालः स विज्ञेयो यत्र जातो हरिः स्वयम् ॥

The moon was conjoined with *Aldebaran* about 10-34 P M. Kuruksetra mean time, the moon had a south latitude 2°30′ and Aldebaran's south latitude was 5°28′. The moon and Aldebaran were separated by about 3° only. Thus at midnight the conjunction of Moon with Rohinī (*Aldebaran*), was a beautiful phenomenon to observe

If, however, we pin any faith in the following statement as to the horoscope of Krsna's birth-time as it is given in a work on *Jyotisa* (Astrology) named खमाणिक्य —

उच्चस्थाः शशिभौमचान्द्रिशनयोः लग्नं वृषो लाभगो जीवः ।
सिंहतुलालिषु क्रमवशात् पूषोशनोराहवः ॥
नैशिथः समयोऽष्टमी बुधदिनं ब्रह्मर्क्षमत्र क्षणे ।
श्रीकृष्णाभिधमम्बुजेक्षणमभूदाविः परं ब्रह्म तत् ॥

"In the places of exaltation were the moon, Mars Mercury and Saturn, the ascendant was in the sign Taurus and Jupiter was in the place called *lābha* (*i e* , लाभ, the eleventh house, the sign *Pisces*), in the signs Leo, Libra and Scorpion were respectively the Sun, Venus and the Node, it was midnight and the day of the 8th *tithi* on a Wednesday, and the moon's *naksatra* was *Rohinī*—it was at this instant that the lotus-eyed person named Śrīkrsna was born, and that was the great Brahman itself"—We readily recognise that this statement was a pure invention by an astrologer of times much later than 400 A D

Bentley attempted a solution of this problem of finding date of Krsna's birth from the above data and was led to the date 7th August, 600 A D [1] But here as in the case of Rāma's horoscope, he did not find the astronomical cycle in which this position of planets and the day of the week repeat themselves.

First of all there can be no question of the existence of the 12 signs of the Zodiac in Krsna's time, secondly, the reckoning of the days of the week did not come into vogue

[1] Bentley's Hindu Astronomy, page, 91

in India much before 484 A D.[1] Thirdly the assignment of the houses of exaltation to the different planets cannot be prior to 400 A.D The statements of the type quoted above are pure astrological concoctions, having absolutely no chronological bearing.

Vedic Ritual Literature

On this head we have (1) the *Brāhmanas*, (2) the *Śrauta Sūtras*, (3) *Gṛhya Sūtras* and (4) the *Vedāmgas* These works cannot be of the same antiquity as the Vedas

As to the Brāhmanas, they almost all were completed after the time of Janamejaya Pārikṣita, without any shade of doubt, the Aitareya,[2] Śatapatha[3] and the Gopatha[4] Brahmanas speak of the Aśvamedha sacrifices performed by this prince From what has been shown before *Janamejaya Pārikṣita's* time should be about 2413-2389 B C as Parikṣit lived up to the age of 60 years and was crowned king, 36 years after the Bhārata battle The oldest traditional solstice days as recorded in the Brāhmanas are such as indicate an antiquity of 3550 B C, and that the *Yajurveda* was completed about the time of the Pāndavas *i.e*, 2449 B C[1] The oldest tradition about the winter solstice day was the full-moon day of *Phālguna*, the next tradition about the winter solstice day was the new-moon day of *Māgha* In later times the day of full-moon of *Phālguna* came to mean the beginning of spring as in the *Śatapatha* and the *Taittirīya Brāhmanas*. The date when this was the case has been shown as 756 B C as the superior limit According to the finding in the present work, the date of the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana* has come out as about 1625 B C, the *Sāmkhyāyana Brāhmana* (as distinctly separate from the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*, which has

1 Chapter XXV on Gupta era, Eran Inscription
2 *Aitareya Brahmana*, IV p VII, 21
3 *Satapatha Brahmana*, XIII, 5, 4, 1 Weber's Edn, p. 991
4 *Gopatha Brāhmana*, II, 5

not been brought to light yet) as about 1000 B.C the Vedāngas about 1400 B.C , the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtras* as about 900 B C , the *Āpastamba* and *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtras* about 625 B C These will be found detailed in Chapters XV to XX

In the present work, it has been shown[1] that the Vedic Hindus could find accurately the winter or the summer solstice day. For this the observation of the sun's amplitude at sunrise most probably used to be begun before the dawn With this method came the invariable concomitant of the observation of the heliacal rising of prominent stars at the beginning of the different seasons Thus in the earliest Vedic times, the heliacal risings of the *Aśvins* was found as the beginning of spring, and that of the *Maghās* as the beginning of the rains[2] Some centuries later the heliacal rising of λ *Scorpionis* was used as a mark for the beginning of the Indian season of Dews (*i e* , *Hemanta*). The *Jaiminīya* and the *Tāndya Brāhmanas* speak of the heliacal rising of the *Delphinis* cluster on the winter solstice day and the *Sāmkhāyana* Brāhmana of the heliacal rising of *Pollux*, at the middle of the year or the summer solstice day. In the present work I have generally avoided the use of statements like—"Krttikās do not swerve from the east"[3] or that the *Aśvins* were indicative of a direction[4] There are many things to be considered in this connection. (1) whether the statements mean the true eastward direction, (2) at what altitude did the *Krttikās* or *Aśvins* show the eastward direction (3) what was the latitude of the observer. It is of course easy to see that η *Tauri* the chief star of the *Krttikās* and α *Arietis* of the *Aśvins*, had their

[1] Chapter XIII In the reference quoted in this chapter the method of the *Brāhmana* refers directly to the summer solstice day, on which the gods raised up the sun to the highest limit on the meridian

[2] *Vide* Chapters IV V

[3] *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, II, 1, 2, 3

[4] Ṛgveda M I 116, 3 5

declinations=Zero, respectively at 3000 B C and 2350 B C. very nearly , but these statements cannot yield a solution of the chronological question involved

In the section of this work on the Indian Eras, the main results have been already stated One point of very great importance has been brought to light in the Chapter XXV, on the Gupta era The Indian years before the time of Āryabhata I, were generally begun from the winter solstice day, but after his time gradually the years came to be reckoned from the vernal equinoctial day In the Gupta era, the years were originally of *Pausa Śuklādi* reckoning, but after the year 499 A D , some year of this era which was different in different localities, began the *Caitra Śukla* reckoning Thus one year was a "year of confusion" in Indian calendar which consisted of 15 or 16 lunations The *Caitra Śuklādi* reckoning was thus a creation of Āryabhata I, and all works which show *Caitra Śuklādi* reckoning cannot be dated earlier than 499 A D

Limitations to the Astronomical Determination of Past dates

In finding the date of the Bhārata Battle, the data evolved from the *Mahābhārata* were really—(1) that the year in our own times similar in respect of luni-solar-steller aspects to the year of the battle, was the year 1929 A D and (2) that the day on which the sun turned north in the year of the battle corresponded in our time to Feb 19, 1930 A D From these data it was quite possible to arrive at the year 2449 B C as the year of the battle, but still we could not be sure that this was the real year of the battle unless there was a tradition to support this finding From a strictly astronomical view point the year arrived at might be raised or lowered by one or two multiples of the 19 year cycle Here the astronomical finding got a corroboration from a recorded tradition, *viz* , the Viddha Garga tradition.

Similarly we could not be sure that the antiquity of the Vedic culture is to be dated about 4000 B C , unless we had another event of the solar eclipse as described in the Rg-Veda—which according to my interpretation happened in 3928 B C , on the 26th July—the summer solstice day. Here also we have got other traditional evidences from the Vedas (specially from the *Atharva-Veda*) and also from our calendar on the date for the hoisting of Indra's Flag [1]

In Chapter XVIII on the time references from the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, according to the data which I could evolve from this work on the position of the solstices and from the rules for beginning the *Nakṣatreṣṭi*, *Pañcaśāradīya*, and the *Rājasūya* sacrifices, the date has come out to have been 887-86 B C If the position of the solstices as indicated in the work and as understood by me is only approximate, the date may be raised or lowered by some luni-solar cycle in tropical years If this work, the *Baudhāyana* had in addition an account of a solar eclipse on a fixed day of the year, we could absolutely fix the date It was thus possible to fix a mean date only, for the time when the data evolved were astronomically correct

Speaking generally, an astronomically determined past date from luni-solar data can hardly be absolutely correct, when it is further recalled that there might be errors of observation Lastly we have to settle whether what we get as the date ascertained is to be taken as the date of the work or the date of the tradition Astronomy therefore can only give certain landmarks, as it were, in ancient Indian Chronology, some of which should be subjected to critical examination by epigraphic and other scientific methods that may be discovered and applied to test the findings in this work.

Astronomical Constants used

So far as the astronomical calculations and the findings are concerned, I trust that they are correct to the degree of

[1] *Vide* Chapter VII.

accuracy aimed at, as in this work the most up-to-date astronomical constants have been used throughout. They are for the epoch Greenwich mean noon on January 1, 1900 A.D. and t stands for Julian centuries elapsed from the epoch. Here

L denotes the mean longitude of a planet
ω ,, ,, longitude of its perigee or perihelion
e ,, ,, eccentricity of the orbit
θ ,, ,, longitude of the ascending node of the orbit

(*a*) For the sun's mean elements —

$$L = 280^\circ 40' 56''.37 + 129602768''.13t + 1''.089t^2$$
$$\omega = 281^\circ 13' 15''.17 + 6189''.03t + 1''.63t^2 + 0''.012t^3$$
$$e = 0.01675104 - 0.00004180t - 0.000000126t^2$$

(Newcomb)

(*b*) For the moon's mean elements —

$$a = 283^\circ 36' 46''.74 + 1732564406''.06t + 7''.14t^2 + 0''.0068t^3$$
$$\omega = 334^\circ 26' 27''.45 + 14648522''.52t - 37''.17t^2 - 0''.045t^3$$
$$\theta = 259^\circ 7' 49''.16 - 6962911''.23t + 7''.48t^2 + 0''.008t^3$$

(Brown)

(*c*) For Jupiter's mean elements

$$L = 238^\circ 7' 56''.59 + 10930687''.148t + 1''.20486t^2 - 0''.005926t^3$$
$$\omega = 12^\circ 43' 15''.50 + 5795''.862t + 3''.80258t^2 - 0''.01236t^3$$
$$e = 0.04833475 + 0.000164180t - 0''.0000004676t^2 - 0.0000000017t^3$$

(Leverrier and Gaillot)

For the mean elements of Mercury, Venus and Mars, Newcomb's and Ross's equations have been used, while those for Saturn, the equations used are of Leverrier and Gaillot. The above equations have been taken from the *Connaissance Des Temps*, pp. XI—XVII.

For finding the apparent places of the sun, only the equation of apsis has been applied, and for the apparent places of the moon only 4 or 5 of the principal equations have been applied generally. In the case of the solar eclipses, the mean place of the moon has been corrected by a maximum of 15 equations. The planetary perturbations have not been considered.

Methods of chronology employed

The methods of chronology employed in the present work will, I hope, be readily understood by scholars who are interested in this new science In this general introduction it seems rather out of place to detail them. These methods have developed in me as the necessity for them was felt Those of my readers who feel any special interest for them, will find them fully illustrated throughout this work and I would specially refer them to the sections on the Date of the Bhārata battle and on the Vedic Antiquity I cannot persuade myself to think that I am the first to discover them. In outline they are ·

(1) Employment of the luni-solar cycles of 3, 8, 19, 160 and 1939 sidereal years[1] as established in this work.

(2) Methods of backward calculation of planetary elements from Jan 1, 1900 A.D., G. M Noon

(3) Method of finding the past time when two selected stars had the same right ascension (where possible)

(4) Method of finding an eclipse of the sun in any past age which happened on a given day of the tropical year. The eclipse-cycles established are of —

456, 391, 763 tropical years and others derived from them [2]

[1] The luni solar cycles in tropical years will be found in Chapter IX on the Solar Eclipse in the Rg-Veda

[2] The details have been shown and illustrated both in Chapter IX and the Appendix III thereto.

For finding a solar eclipse near to a past date I have also found the following cycles in the way in which the Babylonian *Saros* is established in astronomical text books

They are —

(1) 18 Julian years+10 5 days (the Chaldean *Saros*)
(2) 57 Julian years+324 75 days
(3) 307 Julian years+173 25 days.
(4) 365 Julian years+132 75 days
(5) 1768 Julian years+338 days

In terms of civil days these cycles are respectively of 6585, 21144, 12305, 133449 and 646100 days

These may prove useful to future researchers in chronology, besides the ones stated before

For facilitating calculations according to the *Indian Siddhāntas*, the following equations true for the *Ardharātrika* system, will be found very useful :—

(*a*) *Sūrya Siddhānta Ahargana* (from "creation") =Julian days+714401708162

(*b*) *Kali Ahargana*+588465=Julian days

(*c*) *Khandakhādyaka Ahargana*+1964030=Julian days.

The luni-solar cycles according to the constants of the *Sūrya-siddhānta*, the *Khandakhādyaka* and the *Āryabhatīya* are the following —

3, 8, 19, 122, 263, 385 and 648 Indian solar-years

Mr Nirmalchandra Lahiri, M A, has worked as my research assistant during the preparation of this work, under the arrangement made by the Calcutta University as detailed in the preface. He has revised all my calculations, has made independent calculations according to my direction and has helped me occasionally with valuable suggestions

I shall be grateful for any corrections and suggestions for the improvement of this work

Calcutta September, 1947 P. C. SENGUPTA

SPECIAL NOTE TO CHAPTER VI

In this work in finding the past dates by the heliacal risings of stars at different seasons, the author was under the impression that the Vedic Hindus were more concerned with the beginning of the dawn than with the actual heliacal rising of the star concerned It is for this reason, that it has been assumed throughout, that the sun's depression below the horizon was 18°, when the star was observed near the horizon and not at the exact heliacal visibility, which might have happened some days earlier On the other hand it may be held that in some cases at least the actual heliacal visibility itself should have been taken as the basis for the determination of the dates This of course may be conceded In the case of the brightest star, *viz.*, *Sirius* or *α Canis Majoris*, the correct depression of the sun below the horizon at its heliacal visibility should be about 10° The Vedic people were perhaps not so very accurate in their observation Hence in the case of this star, the sun's depression below the horizon should be taken at 12° and not 10° at its heliacal visibility This would allow for the necessary altitude of the star above the horizon at the time of observation so that it might be easily recognised This would also allow for the uncertainty of the horizon being clear for observation

In view of the above consideration the finding of the date of Vāmadeva in Chapter VI, should be modified Again Vāmadeva's statement that the Ṛbhus should awake since 12 days have elapsed in their period of sleep in the orb of the sun, may or may not be associated with the heliacal rising of the Dogstar as spoken of by Dīrghatamas If this association is not allowable Vāmadeva's date cannot be found on this

basis If this is allowed, it may be assumed that the summer solstice day was probably estimated from the correct determination of the winter solstice day

It thus becomes necessary to determine by how many days did the estimated summer solstice day, precede the actual summer solstice day It has been shown on page 108, that at about 2000 B C the sun's northerly course lasted for 186 days, while the Vedic people held that the two courses were of equal duration, each having a length of 183 days The estimated summer solstice day would be 3 days before the actual summer solstice day Hence Vāmadeva's statement of 12 days after the summer solstice day as estimated would mean a day 9 days after the summer solstice day The sun's longitude should be taken about 99° and not 102° as used in Chapter VI The sun's depression below the horizon should be 12°, and ω, the obliquity of the ecliptic at 2100 B C $= 23°56'15''$

Hence sun's right ascension $= 99°49'52''$ the sun's declination $= 23°27'30''$ It would follow that —

(1) $\angle ZPS = 120°58'9''$, (2) $\gamma E = 68°51'43''$, (3) the angle $O = 54°17'21''$, (4) $\gamma O = 84°9'24''$, (5) $OL = 36°28'22''$ and (6) $\gamma L = 47°40'52''$ as shown and named in the figure in page 87 Sirius's mean longitude for 1931 being 103°8′, the increase in the longitude of the star till 1931 becomes 55°27′, which shows the date of Vāmadeva to be about 2100 B C. This seems to be a result hardly acceptable Vāmadeva in the Rgveda, M IV, 15, in verses 7-10 invokes the fire-god Agni to bless the Kumāra *Sāhadevya* (son of Sahadeva) whose name is *Somaka* According to the Purānas, Sahadeva, the son of Jarāsandha, was killed in the Bhārata battle, and his son, the grandson of Jarāsandha was *Somadhi* If *Somaka* and *Somadhi* mean the same prince, the date of Vāmadeva should be about 2449 B C , which is the date of the Bhārata battle according to the finding in this work in Chapters I-III. Vāmadeva also speaks of the *swift*

ascending[1] brilliant emblem of Agni (i e , Krttikās) as stationed on the east of the earth (M IV. 5, 7) Assuming the star *Alcyone* of the *Krttikās* was seen at Rajgir (25°N) at and at an altitude of about 7°30′ (or 8° due to refraction) on the prime-vertical, the date comes out as *2444 B.C* At this altitude also the swift ascending stage may be admitted It is quite unintelligible, how Prof Prey, from the same data assumed that the star was on the prime-vertical at an **altitude of 30°** and thus arrived at the date 1100 B C (Winternitz's History of Indian Literature, Vol I, page 298)

The heliacal visibility of the star is really indicated by what *rsi* Dirghatamas says, we may therefore try to determine the date of Dirghatamas It is the tradition of N. India, that the cloudy sky persists for 3 days after the summer solstice day, the period being called *ambuvācī* or cloudy days We therefore take the following data for the heliacal visibility of the Dogstar in Dīrghatamas's time —

(*a*) Sun's longitude=93°, (*b*) the sun's depression below the horizon at the heliacal visibility of the star = 12°, (*c*) the obliquity of the ecliptic = 24°1′ for 2900 B.C , (*d*) the latitude of the station, Kuruksetra = 30°N

Now the sun's right ascension = 93°17′, the sun's declination = 23°58′54″ We calculate as before—

(1) $\angle ZPS = 121°18'16''$, (2) $\gamma E = 61°58'44''$, (3) $\angle O = 51°29'$ (4) $\gamma 0 = 77°41'7''$, (5) $OL = 41°9'46''$ and (6) γL

[1] तमिन्न्वेव समना समानमभिक्रत्वा पुनती धीतिरश्याः ।
ससस्य चर्मन्नधि चारु पृश्नेरग्रे रुप आरुपितं जबारु ॥७॥

Translation

"May our self-purifying praise, suited to his glory, and accompanied by worship, quickly attain to that omniform (*Vaisvānara*) whose swift ascending brilliant (orb) is stationed on the east of the earth, to mount, like the sun, above the immovable heaven "

Here in place of "orb" as supplied by Wilson, the word should have been "emblem " i e , the *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*) of which the regent is the firegod *Vaisvānara* or Agni Hence is our astronomical interpretation, which is echoed in the *Satapatha Brāhmana*, *Kānda*, II, Ch , 1, 2 3, that the *Krttikās* do not swerve from the east

$=36°31'21''$, (7) the increase in the longitude of Sirius till $1931=66°77'$ nearly The date arrived at for Dīrghatamas becomes *2925 B C*

Now the date of the Bhārata battle as found in this work has been 2449 B.C This *rsi* Dīrghatamas was a contemporary of King Bharata of the lunar race according to the *Aitareya Brāhmana*[1] Between Bharata and Yudhisthira the dynastic list of the lunar race as given in the *Mahābhārata* (MBh , Ādi, Chapter 95), records 17 reign periods of princes of this dynasty The interval between the dates stated above is 476 years, which divided by 17, makes the average length of a reign period = 28 years Hence the historical method here corroborates the astronomical finding

As to the remaining findings in this work on the basis of seasonal heliacal risings of stars, perhaps need no modification specially when the stars are ecliptic and also when they are of a magnitude less than the second

[1] *Aitareya Brāhmana*, Ch 39, Khanda 9, 22

एतेन ह वा ऐन्द्रेण महाभिषेकेण दीर्घतमा मामतेयो भरतं दौष्यन्तिमभिषिषेच तस्माद् भरतो दौष्यन्तिः समन्तं सर्वतः पृथिवीं जयन् परीयायाश्वैश्च मेध्यैरीजे ।

"By this Aindra great anointing, Dīrghatamas, the son of Mamatā, bathed the King Bharata, the son of Dusyanta By virtue of it Bharata, the son of Dusyanta, conquered the whole world in all the quarters in his victorious expedition and also performed the Aśvamedha sacrifice "

Cf also *Satapatha Brāhmana*, Ch 13, 5, 4, 11 14 Weber s Edn , p 995 Here no mention is made of the priest Dīrghatamas

ANCIENT INDIAN CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER I

DATE OF THE BHĀRATA BATTLE

Evidence from the Mahābhārata

The Bhārata battle is now generally believed to have been a real pre-historic past event It is on this assumption that we propose to determine the date of this battle Hitherto no epigrapic evidence leading to this date has been brought to light Consequently we have to rely on our great epic the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas* The description of the fight can be found only in the *Mahābhārata* while the *Purānas* definitely indicate that it was a real event In this chapter we rely solely on the *Mahābhārata* astronomical references The great epic *Mahābhārata* has had its development into the present form, from its earliest nucleus in the form of *gāthā nārasaṁsīs*, *i e*, sagas or songs of heroes In fact the *Mahābhārata* itself is *jaya* or a tale of victory, so also are the *Purānas* The next stage in the development of the *Mahābhārata* was perhaps in the form of the works *Bhārata* and the *Mahābhārata* as we find enumerated in the *Āśvalāyana Grhya Sūtra* (III, 4, 4) The present compilation began from about the time of the Maurya emperors There are in it mention of the Buddhist monks and the Buddhists in several places [1] Again one astronomical statement runs thus —

"First comes the day and then night, the months begin from the light half, *naksatras* begin with *Sravanā* and the seasons with winter "[2]

[1] Book I, Ch 70 लोकायतिकमुख्यैश्च समन्तादनुनादितम् ॥ 2880 of Ādi Parva, Book VII, Ch 45, St 30, which runs thus अथोदीच्याश्चाङ्गकामागधाश्च शिष्टान् धर्मानुपजीवन्ति बुद्धा । Also Book XII, Ch 218, Stanza 31, etc, contains the Buddhist doctrines of rebirth Asiatic Society Edition of the *Mahābhārata*

[2] अह पूर्व्वं ततो रात्रिर्मासा शुक्लादय स्मृता. ।
श्रवणादीनि ऋक्षाणि ऋतव' शिशिरादय ॥२॥

Aśvamedha, Ch 44 St 2

In 1931 A D , the celestial longitude of *Śravaṇā* (*Altair*) was 300° 48′ 9″ According to the modern *Sūrya Siddhāntā*, the polar longitude of this star is 280°,[1] while Brahmagupta in his *Brāhmasphuta Siddhānta* quotes its earlier polar longitude as 278°[2] Hence according to the former work, the star *Sravaṇā* itself marks the first point of the *nakṣatra* and according to the latter, the *nakṣatra* begins at 2° ahead of the star The *Mahābhārata* stanza quoted above shows that the winter solstitial colure passed through the star *Altair* (*Śravaṇā*) itself or through a point 2° ahead of it, as the season winter is always taken in Hindu astronomy to begin with the winter solstice The passage indicates that winter began when the sun entered the *nakṣatra Śravaṇā* It shows that the star *Altair* had at that time a celestial longitude of 270° or 268°, the latter according to the *Brāhmasphuta Siddhānta* The present longitude of *Altair* may be taken as 301° nearly The total shifting of that solstitial point has now, therefore, been 31°, which indicates a lapse of time = 2232 years This means the epoch to be the year 297 B C If we accept Brahmagupta's statement for the position of this star, the date is pushed up to 441 B C Hence there is hardly any doubt that the *Mahābhārata* began to be compiled in its modern form from 400 to 300 B C[3] Before this as we have said already, there were known two books the *Bhārata* and the *Mahābhārata* as mentioned in the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*[4] The great epic, as we have it now, has swallowed up both the earlier works, and the oldest strata in it can be found with great difficulty The present book is in itself in the most discursive form Whenever a topic is raised, it is dilated in a way which is out of proportion to the real story of the Pāndava victory In this way some of the stanzas of the old saga

[1] देव्यान्ते श्रवणस्थिति ।

Surya Siddhānta, viii, 1

[2] मकरेऽष्टनवे ।

Brāhmasphuta Siddhānta, Ch X, 3

[3] Cf S B Dikshita's भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र, p 111, 2nd edition He estimates the date at 450 B C

[4] "सुमन्तु जैमिनि वैशम्पायन-पैलसूत्रभाष्य भारत-महाभारत धर्माचार्याः जानन्ति ।"

Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra, Ch 3, K 4 Sūtra 4

have got displaced from their proper settings, as many details came to be woven often uncouthly, into the story

The Time References from the Mahābhārata

We shall now try to set forth some of the time references as found in the present *Mahābhārata* which we understand to be the oldest, and which lead to the determination of the year of the Bhārata battle

In these references quoted below, the days are indicated by the position of the moon near a star No mention of *tithi* is made We shall have the distinct references to the *Astakās*, *Āmāvāsyās* (not *amāvasyā*) or the period of moon's invisibility, and *Paurnamāsis*

Naksatras in these references mean most probably single-stars or star groups In later times of the *Vedāngas* there are indeed recognised 27 *naksatras* of equal space into which the ecliptic was divided, but we do not know the exact point from which this division was begun It is, therefore, safer to take the *naksatras* to mean stars or star groups in this connection

The *Mahābhārata* astronomical references which we are going to use for determining the year of the Bhārata battle, are *casual* or *incidental statements*, and as such do not directly state the time or the position of the equinoxes or the solstices of the year in which the event happened They state firstly the moon's phases near to several stars at some of the incidents of the battle and secondly indicate the day on which the sun reached the winter solstice that year We state them as follows —

(i) In the *Udyoga Parva* or Book V, Ch 142, the stanza 18 runs as follows —

'From the seventh day from to day, there will be the period of the moon's invisibility, so begin the battle in that, as its presiding deity has been declared to be Indra '[1]

This is taken from the speech of Krsna to Karna at the end of his unsuccessful peace-mission to the Kaurava court It means

[1] सप्तमाच्चापि दिवसादामावास्या भविष्यति ।
संग्रामे युज्यतां तस्यां तां ह्याहुः शक्रदेवताम् ॥
Bk V, Ch 142, St 18

that before the battle broke out there was a new-moon near the star *Antares* or *Jyesthā* of which the presiding deity is Indra. As invisibility of the moon was taken to last two days, and only one presiding deity is mentioned, this presiding deity Indra, shows the star *Jyesthā* near which happened the new-moon. This new-moon marked the beginning of the synodic month of *Agrahāyana* of the year of the battle.

Again from the fifth case-ending in '*saptamāt*,' 'from the seventh day from to-day' shows that when the speech was made, the *Astakā* or the last quarter of the current month of *Kārttika* was just over. At the mean rate the moon takes about 7.5 days to pass from *Regulus* to *Antares*. Hence in the latter half of the previous night the straight edge of the dichotomised moon was probably observed as almost passing through the star *Regulus*. This formed the basis of this prediction of the coming new-moon. The moon's invisibility was thus to begin from the 7th day and last till the day following. We further learn that while Krsna was negotiating for peace at the Kaurava Court, there was a day when the moon neared the *naksatra Pusyā* (δ, η, γ *Cancri*) group, from Duryodhana's command which was thus expressed :—

"He repeatedly said 'march ye princes, to Kuruksetra, today the moon is at *Pusyā*.'"[1]

The day on which Krsna addressed Karna was the fourth day from that day.

Hence in the year of the battle, the last quarter of *Kārttika* took place near the star *Regulus* and the next new-moon near the star *Antares* which marked the beginning of the lunar month of *Agrahāyana*. But the battle did not actually begin with this new-moon. For on the eve of the first day of the battle Vyāsa thus speaks to Dhrtarāstra :—

(ii) "Tonight I find the full moon at the *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*) lustreless, the moon became of a fire-like colour in a lotus-hued heaven."[2]

[1] प्रयाध्वं वै कुरुक्षेत्रम् पुष्योऽद्येति पुन पुन ।
M. Bh., *Udyoga*, 150, 3

[2] अलक्ष्य प्रभया हीना पौर्णमासीं च कार्त्तिकीम् ।
चन्द्रोऽभूदग्निवर्णश्च पद्मवर्णे नभस्तले ॥
M. Bh., *Bhisma Parva* or Bk. VI, Ch. 2, 23

If there be a new-moon at the star *Antares*, the next full-moon cannot be at the star group *Pleiades*. At the mean rate the moon takes exactly 12 days 23 hours or about 13 days to pass from the star *Antares* to *Pleiades*. The moon was about 13 days old and not full. Vyāsa by looking at such a moon thought the night to be *Paurnamāsī* no doubt, but it was of the *Anumati* type and not of the type *Rākā*, which was the next night. There are other references to show that the moon could not be full on the eve of the first day of the battle.

On the fourteenth day of the battle, Jayadratha, Duryodhana's brother-in-law, was killed at sunset, the fight was continued into the night, and at midnight the *Rākṣasa* hero Ghatotkaca was killed. The contending armies were thoroughly tired and slept under truce on the battle-field itself.[2] The fighting was resumed when the moon rose sometime before sunrise. How and when the fight was resumed are described in the following way:—

(iii) "Just as the sea is raised up and troubled by the rise of the moon, so up-raised was the sea of armies by the rise of the moon, then began again the battle, O King, of men wishing blessed life in the next world for the destruction of humanity."[3]

As to the time when the fight was resumed we have the statement

[1] *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Ch 32, 10

या पूर्वा पौर्णमासी सानुमतिर्योत्तरा सा राका या पूर्वामावास्या सा सिनीवाली योत्तरा सा कुहू ।

[2] अर्द्धरात्रे, समाजज्ञे निद्रान्धाना विशेषत ।
सर्व्वे ह्यासन्निरुत्साहा, क्षत्रिया दीनचेतस ॥२६॥
ते यूय यदि मन्यध्वमुपारमत सैनिका. ।
निमीलयत चात्रैव रणभूमौ मुहूर्त्तकम् ॥२७॥
ततो विनिद्रा विश्रान्ता श्चन्द्रमस्युदिते पुनः ।
ससाधयिष्यथान्योन्य सग्राम कुरुपाण्डवा: ॥२८॥

M Bh , *Drona*, Ch 185

[3] यथा चन्द्रोदयोद्भूत क्षुभित सागरोऽभवत ।
तथा चन्द्रोदयोद्भूत स बभूव नलार्णव: ॥५५॥
तत प्रववृते युद्ध पुनरेव विशाम्पते
लोके लोकविनाशाय परलोकमभीप्सताम् ॥५६॥

M Bh , *Drona*, Ch 185

(iv) "The battle was resumed when only one-fourth of the night was left"[1]

Here 'one-fourth' must mean some small part as we cannot think that they could exactly estimate 'one-fourth of the night' Thus the moon rose that night when only a small part of it was left, and the description of the moon as it rose was

(v) "Then the moon which was like the head of the bull of Mahādeva, like the bow of Cupid fully drawn out, and as pleasant as the smile of a newly married wife, slowly began to spread her golden rays"[2]

It was a crescent moon with sharp horns like those of a bull, that rose sometime before sunrise, and was $27\frac{1}{2}$ days old From this it is clear that the Bhārata battle was not begun on the new-moon day spoken of in our reference (i), and on the eve of the first day of the battle she was not quite full but about 13 days old As has been said already the night before the first day of the battle was a *Paurnamāsī* of the *Anumati* type—it was not *Rākā*

On the 18th day of the battle, Kisna's half-brother Valadeva was present at the mace-duel between Duryodhana and Bhīma. He just returned from a tour of pilgrimage to the holy places His words were —

(vi) "Since I started out, to-day is 40 days and 2 more, I went away with the moon at *Pusyā* and have returned with the moon at *Śravanā* (*Altair*)"[3]

Hence on the day of the mace-duel, the moon was near to the star *Altair*, and at the mean rate the moon takes about 18 days and $8\frac{1}{3}$ hours to pass from *Alcyone* to *Altair* Owing to the moon's unequal motion it is quite possible for her to accomplish this journey in 18 days Hence this passage confirms the statement made above that on the eve of the first day of the battle

[1] त्रिभागमात्रशेषायां रात्र्यां युद्धमवर्तत ॥१॥

M Bh, *Drona*, Ch 187

[2] ककुद्मिनोत्तमगात्रसमद्युति स्मरशरासनपूर्णसमप्रभ ।
नववधूस्मितचारुमनोहर प्रविसृत. कुमुदाकरबान्धव ॥४८॥

M Bh, *Drona*, Ch 185

[3] चत्वारिंशदहान्यद्य द्वे च मे निःसृतस्य वै ।
पुष्येण संप्रयातोऽस्मि श्रवणे पुनरागत ॥

M Bh, *Salya*, Ch 34, 6

the moon was near to the star group *Krttikās* or *Alcyone* and that she was about 13 days old For—

From the day of the moon at *Pusyā* till the day of Krsna's speech to Karna	3	days
From that day till the new-moon at *Antares* (*Jyesthā*)	8	,,
From the new-moon at *Antares* till the moon at the *Krttikās*	13	,,
And the fight had already lasted	17	,,
Total	41	days

The next day was the last day of the battle and was the 42nd day from the day when the army of Duryodhana marched to Kuruksetra and Valadeva started out on his tour

On the 10th day of the battle at sunset, Bhīsma, the first general of the Kaurava army, fell on his 'bed of arrows,' became incapacitated for further participating in the fight and expired after 58 days, as soon as it was observed that the sun had turned north Yudhisthira came to the battle-field to see Bhīsma expire and to perform the last rites The *Mahābhārata* passage runs thus —

(*vii*) "Yudhisthira having lived at the nice city of Hastinā-pura for fifty nights (after the battle was over), remembered that the day of expiration of the chief of the Kauravas (*i e*, Bhīsma) had come He went out of Hastināpura with a party of priests, after having seen (or rather inferred) that the sun had stopped from the southerly course, and that the northerly course had begun "[1]

It is clear that special observation of the winter solstice day was made in the year of the battle, as Bhīsma was to expire as soon as it was observed that the sun had turned north Yudhisthira started most likely in the morning from his capital to meet Bhīsma on the battle-field After the lapse of 50 nights

[1] उषित्वा शर्व्वरी श्रीमान् पञ्चाशन्नगरोत्तमे ।
समय कौरवाग्रस्य सस्मार पुरुषर्षभ. ॥५॥
स निर्ययौ गजपुराद् याजकैः परिवारित
दृष्ट्वा निवृत्तमादित्य प्रवृत्त चोत्तरायणम् ॥६॥

M, Bh, *Anuśāsana*, or BK XIII, Ch 167

from the evening on which the battle ended he was sure that the sun had turned north Hence the day of Yudhisthira's starting out from his capital was the day following the winter solstice day When Yudhisthira met Bhīsma at Kuruksetra, he (Bhīsma) thus spoke to him —

(*viii*) "It is a piece of good luck, O Yudhisthira, the son of Kuntī, that you have come with your ministers The thousand rayed glorious Sun has certainly turned back Here lying on my bed of pointed arrows, I have passed 58 nights, this time has been to me as endless as a hundred years O Yudhisthira the lunar month of Māgha is now fully on and its three-fourths are over This ought to be the light half of the month "[1]

Here the last sentence was a pious wish not materialised In our reference (*vii*) '50 nights' and in (*viii*) '58 nights are corroborative of each other A lapse of 50 nights from the end of the battle and that of 58 nights from the evening on which Bhīsma fell on his "bed of arrows," both indicate the same day Three-fourths of *Māgha* became over at the last quarter or the *Ekāstakā* day The time indication is peculiarly identical with that of the *Brāhmanas* The lunar months here used are undoubtedly from the light half of the month, for reasons set forth below —

(*a*) Time from the new moon at *Antares* to the moon's reaching the *Krttikās* or *Pleiades*	13	days
Bhīsma's generalship	10	,,
Bhīsma on death bed	58	,,
Total	81	,,

(*b*) From the new-moon at *Antares* or the beginning of the lunar *Agrahāyana* till its end	29 5	days
The lunar month of *Pausa*	29 5	,,
¾ of the lunar month of *Māgha*	22 0	,,
Total	81	,,

[1] दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि कौन्तेय सहामात्यो युधिष्ठिर ।
परिवृत्तो हि भगवान् सहस्रांशुर्दिवाकरः ॥२६॥
अष्टपञ्चाशतं रात्र्यः शयानस्याद्य मे गताः ।
शरेषु निशिताग्रेषु यथा वर्षशतं तथा ॥२७॥
माघोऽयं समनुप्राप्तो मासः सौम्यो युधिष्ठिर ।
त्रिभागशेषः पक्षोऽयं शुक्लो भवितुमर्हति ॥२८॥

M Bh, Anusasana or Bk XIII, Ch 167

Hence the two reckonings are corroborative of each other If, on the other hand, we assume that the lunar months counted here were from the dark-half of the month and ending with the light half, the synodic month of *Agrahāyana* would be half over with the new-moon at *Antares* From that time till ¾th of *Māgha* were over, we could get only —

(c) Half of *Agrahāyana*		14 75 days
Month of *Pausa*		29 50 ,,
¾ of *Māgha*		22 00 ,,
	Total	66 25 ,,

The number of days here counted falls short of the 68 days which comprised Bhīsma's generalship of 10 days+58 days in which he was on death bed It is thus evident that the lunar months which end with the full-moon and half a month earlier than the new-moon ending lunar months, are not used in these *Mahābhārata* references [1] It is also clear that the *Mahābhārata* says that Bhīsma expired at sunset on the day of the last quarter of *Māgha* So far as astronomical calculation is concerned, we take that the sun reached the winter solstice one day before the expiry of Bhīsma, or that full 49 nights after the battle ended, the sun reached the winter solstice according to our reference (*vii*) We are inclined to think that in this reference a clear statement occurs as to the observation of the winter solstice day, no matter even if the reference (*viii*) be a fiction

To sum up —In the year of the Bhārata battle, there was the last quarter of the month of *Kārttika* with the moon near about the star *Regulus* as we have inferred Secondly, in that year the beginning of the next month of *Agrahāyana*

[1] The original word in place of *Śukla* was perhaps *Krsna* and a subsequent redactor changed the word to *Śukla*, to bring out the approved time for the death of Bhīsma Nilakantha, the commentator of the *Mahābhārata* quotes a verse from the *Bhārata Sāvitrī*, which also says that ' Bhīsma was killed by Arjuna on the 8th day of the dark half of the month of *Māgha* see *Bhīsma Parva*, ch 17, stanza 2 In an edition of the *Bhārata Sāvitri* the verse runs as Bhīsma was killed in the month of Agrahāyana on the 8th day of the dark half ' This of course refers to the day on which Bhīsma fell on his 'bed of arrows', 58 days after that, *i e*, exactly one day less than full two synodic months becomes the 7th day of *dark* half of *Māgha* Hence also Bhīsma expired in the dark half of *Māgha* and not in the light half

took place with the new-moon near the star *Antares* or *Jyesthā*, which is directly stated Thirdly, the battle lasted till the moon reached the star *Altair* or *Śravaṇā* Fourthly, when 49 nights after the battle expired, the sun reached the winter solstice We are to understand by the term '*Nakṣatra*' simply a star or a star-group We should also recollect that Bhīsma expired on the day of the last quarter of *Māgha* and, as we have understood, the sun's reaching the winter solstice took place one day earlier

From these references it is possible to determine the date of the Bhārata battle. We shall use **two methods**, but the results obtained from both the methods will be approximate In the first method we shall, for the sake of convenience, assume that *the nearness of the moon to the several stars as equivalent to exact equality in celestial longitude of the moon with those stars* With this meaning of 'nearness' we may derive the following sets of data for finding the year of the Bhārata battle

Data for the calculation of the Date of the Bhārata battle by the **First Method**

(*a*) There was a new-moon at the star *Antares*, before the battle broke out and the sun turned north in 80 days, *i e*, one day before Bhīsma's expiry

(*b*) On the eve of the first day of the battle, the moon 13 days old was in conjunction with the *Krttikās or Alcyone*, and the sun turned north in 10 + 57 = 67 days

(*c*) On the 18th day of the battle, moon 31 days old was in conjunction with *Śravaṇā* or *Altair* and the sun turned north in 49 days

Calculation of Date by the First Method

Before we can proceed with our calculation we note down below the mean celestial longitudes of the stars concerned for the year 1931

Star	Mean celestial longitude
Jyesthā or *Antares*	248° 47′ 57″
Krttikā or *Alcyone*	59° 1′ 44″
Śravaṇā or *Altair*	300° 48′ 9″

(A) From the data (*a*) we assume, as already stated, that the sun, the moon and the star *Antares* had the same celestial longitude at that new-moon

Hence the present (1931) longitude of the sun at the new-moon at *Antares*	218°	47′	57″	
Sun's motion in 80 days	78°	51′	6″	
Hence the mean celestial long in 1931 of the sun for reaching the winter solstice of the year of the Bhārata battle	327°	39′	3″	(1)

(B) From the data (*b*), the moon at the assumed conjunction with *Kṛttikā* or *Alcyone* was 13 days old

Hence the (1931) celestial longitude of the moon at that time was	59°	1′	44″	
The moon was 13 days old and the mean synodic month has a length of 29 530588 days				
the moon was ahead of the sun by $\frac{360° \times 13}{29\ 530588}$ or	158°	28′	47″	
the sun's present day (1931) mean celestial longitude for that time	260°	32′	57″	
Sun's motion in 67 days	66°	2′	18″	
Hence the present (1931) mean celestial longitude of the sun for reaching the winter solstice of the year of the Bhārata battle	326°	35′	15″	(2)

(C) From data (*c*) the moon at our assumed conjunction with *Sravanā* or *Altair* was 31 days old

Hence the present (1931) celestial longitude of the moon for that time	300°	48′	9″	
The moon was ahead of the sun by $\frac{360° \times 31}{29\ 530588}$ or	377°	54′	48″	
the present (1931) celestial long of the sun for that time	282°	53′	21″	
Sun's motion in 49 days	48°	17′	48″	
Hence the (1931) mean celestial longitude of the sun for reaching the winter solstice of the year of the Bhārata battle	331°	11′	9″	(3)

We thus arrive at three divergent values of the present (1931) mean celestial longitude of the sun for reaching the winter solstice of the year of the Bhārata battle, *viz*

From data (*a*)	327°	39′	3″,	result	(1)
,, ,, (*b*)	326°	35′	15″,	,,	(2)
,, ,, (*c*)	331°	11′	9″,	,,	(3)
The mean of these values =	328°	28′	29″		

From the above calculations, the present (1931) mean tropical longitude of the sun at the winter solstice of the year of the Bhārata battle is the mean of the results (1), (2) and (3), *viz*, 328° 28′ 29″

Hence as a first step the total shifting of the winter solstice up to 1931 A D is roughly 328° 28′ 29″ − 270° = 58° 28′ 29″, which represents a lapse of 4228 years[1]

Now 42 centuries before 1900 A D, the longitude of the sun's apogee was about 29° Hence allowing for the change in the eccentricity of the sun's apparent orbit, the sun's equation of centre for the *mean* longitude of 270° in the year of the Bhārata battle works out to have been + 1° 51′ nearly

Hence what was 270° of the longitude of the sun in the battle year, was 328° 28′ *plus* 1° 51′ (= 330° 19′) in the year 1931 A D, which shows a solsticial shifting of 60° 19′ and represents a lapse of 4362 years

The year of the Bhārata battle thus becomes near to **2432 B C** This is the best result that can be obtained from our first method

Calculation of Date by the Second Method

On looking up some of the recent calendars, we find that a new-moon very nearly at the star *Antares* took place on —

(1) December 1, 1929, at 4 hrs 48 4 min G M T or at 9 hrs 56 4 min Kuruksetra mean time

[1] Annual rate of precession = 50″ 2564 +0′ 0222 T, where T = no of centuries from 1900 A D As a first approximation, with the annual rate of 50″ 25, the solstices take 1183 years to recede through 58° 27 28 Now from the above equation the annual rate for 1931 A D is 50 2633, and 1188 years earlier (*i e*, 4157 years before 1900 A D) it was 49′ 3335 Working with the mean of the two values (*viz* 49 7984) the lapse of years comes out to be 4228

The sun's longitude at G M midnight or Kurukṣetra mean time 5 hrs 8 min A M was	248° 19′ 10″
The moon's longitude at that time	246° 4′ 24″
The longitude of *Antares*	248° 46′ nearly

Hence December 1, 1929 was a new-moon day, the conjunction taking place very near to *Antares* It was the day of the new-moon of which the presiding deity was Indra and it was the beginning of the synodic month of *Agrahāyana* Thirteen days later was—

(2) December 14, 1929, at 5-8 P M of Kurukṣetra mean time which corresponded with the eve of the first day of the Bhārata battle

The sun's longitude	262° 1′ 57″
The moon's longitude	54° 40′ 7″
The longitude of *Kṛttikā* or *Alcyone*	59° nearly

The moon came to conjunction with *Kṛttikā* in about 8⅓ hrs more In the evening at Kurukṣetra, the moon was about 3° behind the *Kṛttikās* visibly, the moon being affected by parallax due to its position near the eastern horizon at nightfall Eighteen days later was—

(3) January 1, 1930, at 5-8 P M of Kurukṣetra mean time

The sun's longitude	280° 22′ 2″
The moon's longitude	296° 47′ 35″
The longitude of *Altair* or *Śravaṇā*	300° 45′ nearly

The moon came to conjunction with *Altair* in 8 hours more This evening corresponded with the evening on which the Bhārata battle ended Fifty days later came—

(4) 20th February, 1930, the day corresponding to that of Bhīṣma's expiry At 5-8 P M of Kurukṣetra mean time

The sun's longitude	331° 8′ 1″
The moon's longitude	242° 40′ 55″

The moon had come to her last quarter at about 1½ hrs before

Assuming that the sun turned north exactly one day before Bhīsma's expiry, as before, the true anniversary of the winter solstice day of the year of the Bhārata battle fell on the 19th February, 1930

On the evening of the 19th February, 1930 A D , at 5-8 P M of Kuruksetra time which was the G M noon of that day, the sun's *mean* tropical longitude was 328° 42′ nearly which is in excess of the value obtained by the first method by 15′ only

By a similar process shown before in our first method, we deduce that the sun's equation of centre for the sun's *mean* longitude of 270° in the year of the battle was +1° 51′ nearly

Hence what was 270° in the year of the battle was 328° 42′+ 1° 51′ *i e* 330° 33′ in 1930 A D

The total shifting of the solstices up to 1930 A D thus becomes 60° 33′ representing a lapse of 4379 years

The battle year should be thus very near to 2450 B C

By the first method we have arrived at the date 2432 B C , while our second method gives the year 2450 B C We have now to examine if there is any tradition which supports these findings

Three Traditions as to the Date of the Bhārata Battle

There are at present known three orthodox traditions as to the date of the Bhārata battle

(1) The first of the traditions is due to Āryabhata I (499 A D), who in his *Daśagītikā*, 3, says ' of the present *Kalpa*, or Eon six *Manus*, 27 *Mahāyugas* and three quarter *Yugas* elapsed before the Thursday of the Bhāratas ' [1] This is a simple statement that the Pāndavas lived at the beginning of the astronomical Kali age or at about 3102 B C

(2) The second tradition recorded by Varāhamihira (550 A D) is ascribed by him to an earlier astronomer Vriddha Garga (much earlier than Āryabhata I) Varāha says ' The seven *rsis* were in the *Maghās* when the King Yudhisthira was reigning

[1] काहो मनवो ढ मनुयुग श्ख गतास्ते च मनुयुगछ्ना च ।
कल्पादेर्युगपादा ग च गुरुदिवसाच्च भारतात् पूर्वम् ॥

Daśagītikā, 3

over the earth, his era is the era of the Saka Kings to which 2526 have been added '[1] The first part of this statement has remained a riddle to all researchers up to the present time The second part gives a most categorical statement that Yudhisthira became King in —2526 of Saka era, which corresponds to 2449 B C

(3) The third tradition is due to an astronomical writer of the *Purānas*, who says, 'From the birth of Pariksit to the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda, the time is one thousand and fifty years (or one thousand fifteen years or one thousand five hundred years) '[2]

Now taking the accession of Chandragupta to have taken place in 321 B C, and the rule of the Nandas to have lasted 50 years in all, the birth of Parīksita, according to the statement of this *Purānic* writer, becomes about 1421 B C or 1871 B C

Of these three traditions our finding of the date of the Bhārata battle, whether 2432 or 2450 B C approaches closest to the year, — 2526 of the Saka era or 2449 B C It is therefore, necessary to examine the year, — 2526 of the Saka era

Astronomical Examination of the year,—2526 of the Saka era or 2449 B C

We have found before that in 1851 of Saka era elapsed or 1929 – 30 A D, the various 'conjunctions' of the moon with the sun and the several stars happened in closest coincidence with the *Mahābhārata* references

From,—2526 to 1851 elapsed of the Saka era, the number of years was 4377 We shall assume that these were sidereal years

[1] आसन मघासु मुनय शासति पृथ्वीं युधिष्ठिरे नृपतौ ।
षड्द्विकपञ्चद्वियुतशककालस्तस्य राज्ञश्च ॥

Brhatsamhitā, xiii, 3

[2] यावत परीक्षितो जन्म यावत नन्दाभिषेचनम् ।
एवं वर्षसहस्रं तु ज्ञेयं पञ्चाशदुत्तरम् ॥

(पञ्चदशोत्तरम्—पञ्चशतोत्तरम् पाठान्तरे)

Pargiter's *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p 58

Now,

$$\frac{\text{Sidereal year}}{\text{Sidereal month}} = \frac{365\ 25636}{27\ 32166}$$

$$= 13 + \frac{1}{2+}\ \frac{1}{1+}\ \frac{1}{2+}\ \frac{1}{2+}\ \frac{1}{8+}\ \frac{1}{12+}\ \frac{1}{7+}$$

The successive convergents are

$$13,\ \frac{27}{2},\ \frac{40}{3},\ \frac{107}{8},\ \frac{254}{19},\ \frac{2139}{160},\ \frac{25922}{1939},\ \text{etc}$$

The last three of the above convergents give the luni-solar cycles of 19, 160 and 1939 years in which the moon's phases with respect to the sun and the stars repeat themselves

Here we have $4377 = 1939 \times 2 + 160 \times 4 + 19$

In fact we have—

Sidereal year $\times$ 4377 = 1598727 092 days

Sidereal month $\times$ 58515 = 1598726 993 ,,

and Synodic month $\times$ 54133 = 1598726 978 ,,

Thus from a consideration of the mean motions of the sun and the moon, it is inferred as a certainty that the various 'conjunctions' of the moon with the sun and the stars recorded in the *Mahābhārata* did actually happen in —2526 of Śaka era or 2449 B C Here the *Mahābhārata* references enable us to construct the battle calendar, we further, want to see how the various phases of the moon near to the fixed stars happened in the battle-year on the days stated, and how the winter solstice day stood in the year in relation to the day of Bhīsma's expiry

Construction of the Battle Calendar

It has been said before that a new moon near the star *Antares* happened in our times on December 1, 1929 A D , which we have taken to have been more or less exactly similar to that which happened in the year of the battle

Now Julian Days on Dec 1, 1929 =2425947,

less no of days in 54138 synodic months = 1598727, as shown above

∴ Julian days for the required date =827220, whence

the date arrived at is October 21, 2449 B C

Now Julian days on Jan 1, 1900 A D =2415021,

and Julian days on Oct 21, 2449 B C =827220

Difference =1587801 days

=43 47 Julian centuries

+59 25 days

(1) Hence on Oct 21, 2449 B C at G M N

Mean Sun =189°25′45″ 15,

,, Moon =191°18′ 4″ 25,

Lunar Perigee = 188°26′44″ 75,

A Node =103° 9′53″ 75,

Sun's Apogee =27° 4′ 2″ 71,

Sun's eccentricity =0 01833

apparent Sun = 188°46′,

,, Moon = 191°46′,

Mean Longitude of *Antares* = 188°13′ nearly

The new moon near *Antares*, happened about 6 hrs before, *i e* , at 11−8 A M Kuruksetra mean-time and conjunction took place very near to the star *Antares*

which is the junction star of the *naksatra Jyesthā* This new moon is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* reference (*i*) cited before

(2) We have next on Nov 3, 2449 B C at G M N , or Kuruksetra mean time 5-8 P M

Mean Sun =202°14′33″,

,, Moon = 2°25′40″,

Lunar Perigee = 189°53′39″,

A Node =120°28′36″

Apparent Sun = 202°4′

,, Moon = 3°34′

Mean longitude of *Krttikā* or *Alcyone* = 358°30′ nearly

The conjunction of the moon with the *Krttikās* had happened about 10 hrs before, *i e* , about 7-8 A M Kuruksetra mean time This phase of the moon is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* reference (*ii*) quoted before At sunset the moon was about 6° below the *Krttikās*

(3) THE BATTLE BEGAN from Nov 4, 2449 B C or the day following The mean longitude of *Rohinī* junction star or *Aldebaran* was 8°17′, the conjunction of the moon with *Rohinī* had taken place on the preceding night at about 2 30 A M Kuruksetra mean time

(4) On Nov 18 at G M T 0 hr or 5 8 A M Kuruksetra mean time

Mean Sun=216°32′ 4″,	Apparent Sun=216°53′
,, Moon=193°39′ 8″,	,, Moon=192°25′
L Perigee=191°30′34″,	Moon's celestial
A Node =101°42′32″	latitude=5°8′42″ N

Hence in the morning of Nov 18, 2449 B C, the sunrise happened at 6-23 A M of Kuruksetra meantime and the moon rose at 4 29 A M of K M T

Thus the moon which was crescent rose about 1 hr 54 min before the sunrise This moonrise is spoken of in the *Mahā bhārata* references (*iii*), (*iv*) and (*v*) quoted before

(5) On Nov 21, at G M N, or K M T, 5-8 P M

Mean Sun=219°59′ 3″,	Appt Sun=220°28′
,, Moon=239°46′11″,	,, Moon=244°47′
Lunar Perigee=191°53′57″,	Mean long of *Sravanā* (*Altair*)
A. Node =101°31′25″	=240°17′ nearly

ON THIS DAY THE BATTLE ENDED, and the moon had been conjoined with the 'junction star' *Sravanā* about 8½ hrs before This was the day of the first visibility of the crescent after the preceding new-moon For on the preceding day, the 20th Nov, 2449 B C at G M Noon,

Appt Sun=219°27′,
,, Moon=230° 5′,
A Node =101°35′
Moon's celestial latitude=4°1′28″N nearly
Moon − Sun =10°38′ only

Hence the moon was not visible at nightfall on this day

The month of lunar *Pauṣa* was most probably reckoned from this 20th Nov, 2449 B C by the calendar authorities of the Pāndava time.

(6) Lastly on Jan 10, 2448 B.C. at G.M N. or K M T, 5 8 P M,

Mean Sun=269°16′ 0″,	Appt Sun=271° 9′,
,, Moon=178°35′22″	,, Moon=175°52′
Lunar Perigee=197°28′10″	
A Node= 98°52′33″	

Thus the sun had reached the winter solstice about 28 hours before, *i e*, on the preceding day as already explained The moon came to her last quarter in about 10½ hrs later Bhīsma expired on this day at about the time for which the longitudes have been calculated The date of the Bhārata battle is thus astronomically established as the year 2449 B C which is supported by the *Vṛddha-Garga* Tradition recorded by Varāhamihira

Are the Mahābhārata References Later Interpolations?[1]

The striking consistency of the *Mahābhārata* references, may lead some critics of our finding to propound the theory that these were all later additions by the epic compiler of about 400 B C, made with the help of an astronomical assistant of his time We are, however, of opinion that such a hypothesis as to their origin is not justifiable

Firstly, these astronomical references are not all collected at any single place they are scattered over the battle books from the *Udyoga* to *Anuśāsana*

Secondly, the knowledge of astronomy, developed in India from the earliest times up to 400 B C, could not enable any

[1] Prof Dr M N Saha in his paper in "Science and Culture" for March, 1939 pp 482 488, raised this question The author of the present work replied to this in the "Science and Culture," July, 1938 n pp 26 29

astronomical assistant to determine the set of those astronomical references which we have used in this chapter So far as our studies go, neither the astronomy of the *Brāhmanas*, nor of the *Vedāngas*, nor of the *Paitāmaha Siddhānta* as summarised in the *Pañcasiddhāntikā* of Varāhamihira, was equal to the task The arguments in favour of our position are set forth below as briefly as possible

From the *Mahābhārata* references cited above, we have evolved two astronomical data for the determination of the year of the Bhārata battle (*i*) that the year of the battle was similar to the year 1929-30 A D of our times in so far as the moon's phases near to the fixed stars are concerned, and (*ii*) that the observers of the sun appointed by the Pāndavas were satisfied that the sun's northerly course had begun exactly after a lapse of 50 nights from the evening on which the battle ended

Before the battle broke out there was a new moon near the star *Antares*, from which the lunar month of *Agrahāyana* began in the year Thirteen days later in the evening, the moon nearly full, was observed near the star group *Krttikās* or *Pleiades* The battle began from the next morning On the night following the fourteenth day of the battle, a crescent moon rose sometime before the day-break On the 18th or the last day of the battle, the moon was conjoined with *Sravanā* or *Altair* —Exactly fifty nights after the battle ended, Yudhisthira was satisfied that the sun had turned north or that the sun had reached the winter solstice one day earlier

As regards the repetitions of the moon's phases near to the fixed stars they occur at intervals of 19 or 160 and 1939 sidereal years Hence by the mere repetition of these phases of the moon near to the fixed stars, no date of any past event can be determined Coupled with these repetitions of the lunar phases, we must exactly know where the winter solstice day stood in relation to these phases or the lunar months of the year in which the event happened Here as shown before, the interval from January 1 to February 20 of 1930, is exactly 50 days

We now proceed to show that the interval of 50 days between the end of the battle and the first day of the sun's northerly course of the year could not be predicted by the astronomical

knowledge that developed in India from the earliest times up to 400 B C In Vedic times, for starting the five yearly luni-solar cycle or *lustrum*, a peculiar synodic month of *Māgha* was used from about 3000 B C This lunar Māgha had these three important features (i) that it should have for its beginning the new-moon at *Dhaniṣṭhā* (*Delphinis*), (ii) its full-moon at the star *Maghā* (*Regulus*) and (iii) its last quarter at the star *Jyeṣṭhā* (*Antares*)[1] In spite of these well pronounced characters, it could not be a sidereally fixed lunar month In our times such a month of *Māgha* happened truly, according to our estimate, in the years 1924, 1927, 1932 and 1935 A D The beginning of this standard *Māgha* oscillates between the 2nd and 6th of February, and its end between the 3rd and 7th of March According to Varāhamihira such a *Māgha* came in the year 2 of *Śaka* elapsed or 80 A D, and this year was similar to 1924 A D of our time If we allow a slightly greater latitude, the year 1929 had also this type of *Māgha* from the 9th of February to the 11th of March Hence both the years 1924 A D and 1929 A D were suitable for starting the Vedic five-yearly cycle, the former being more suitable than the latter

Now 1924 A D, had the same lunar phases as 2454 B C and 1929 A D, the same as the year 2449 B C This latter year has become the year of the Bhārata battle according to our finding Between the years 1924 A D and 1929 A D, we had a Vedic luni-solar cycle of 5 years, and a similar *lustrum* existed between 2454 B C and 2449 B C Here the battle year was similar to 1929 A D, as has been shown already, and the year exactly preceding the battle year by one *lustrum* was similar to 1924 A D

(1) First, let us suppose that the full-moon day of *Māgha* and the winter solstice day were the same day in the year similar to 1924 A D, exactly one *lustrum* before the battle year which was similar to 1929 A D[2] Hence the five yearly Vedic cycle

[1] This topic has been fully discussed in Chapter XIII on 'Solstice days in Vedic Literature'

[2] The reference is here to the age when *Pleiades* and *Regulus* were respectively near to the vernal equinox and the summer solstice, *i e*, about 2150 B C

started therefrom would end on the full moon day of *Māgha* of the battle year It would then be usual to start the Vedic *lustrum* anew from the day following the full-moon day of *Māgha* of the battle year, and this full-moon day would be taken for the winter solstice day according to the reckoning used Now one Vedic year consisted of 12 lunations *plus* 12 nights, hence the estimated day of the next winter solstice would be the 27th day of lunar *Māgha* to come The 28th day of this *Māgha* would be the first day of the sun's northerly course This day would correspond with the 27th February of 1930 A D of our time Hence the predicted first day of the sun s northerly course, and the last day of the battle which corresponded with January 1, 1930 A D, would have between them *an interval of 57 days and not 50 days as found by observation* Thus the predicted day of winter solstice could not generally agree with the accurately observed winter solstice day in the Pāndava times This is also illustrated from the following verse of the *Mahābhārata,* which contains Kṛsna's prediction of the first day of the sun's northerly course on which Bhīsma was to expire

"O chief of Kurus, there still remain 56 days more of your life then laying aside this body you will attain those blissful worlds which are the fitting rewards of your good deeds in this world "[1]

This verse of the original saga is found displaced from its proper setting in the present recensions of the *Mahābhārata* Kṛsna must have addressed these words to Bhīsma at the conclusion of the fight or on the day following We shall discuss this stanza more fully in the next chapter

(2) Secondly, let us suppose that 5 years before the beginning of the battle year, it was found by observation that the day of the new-moon of *Māgha* begun, was the winter solstice day[2], then at

[1] पञ्चाशतं षट् च कुरुप्रवीर शेषं दिनानां तव जीवितस्य ।
ततः शुभैः कर्मफलोदयैस्त्वं समेष्यसे भीष्म विमुच्य देहम् ॥

M Bh, *Santi*, 51, 14

[2] Reference is here to the time about 1400 B C, the date of the *Vedāngas*

the end or termination of the five-yearly cycle at the starting of the battle year, the new moon day of *Māgha* begun, would be reckoned as the winter solstice day The estimated winter solstice day for the beginning of the next year would be the 12th *tithi* of the coming *Māgha* and the first day of the sun's northerly course would be the 13th *tithi* of *Māgha* and in our gauge year 1929-30 A D , it would correspond with the 11th February, 1930 Between the ending day of the battle (corresponding with January 1, 1930) and the first day of the sun's northerly course, there would intervene *41 days as predicted and not 50 days as observed*

Thus judging by the methods of reckoning of the Vedic and post-Vedic followers of the five-yearly luni-solar cycles, it was not possible for an Indian astronomical assistant by any back calculation to furnish the *Mahābhārata* compiler of 400 B C with the set of astronomical references which we have used to establish that the Bhārata battle was fought in 2449 B C

Lastly, it may be contended that "the *Mahābhārata* writer of the 4th century B C , while inserting the astronomical references merely calculated back on the assumption that the Great War was fought when *Pleiades* formed the vernal equinoxial point, because this was an older tradition "

We can here explore the possibilities of the above assumption in the following way —The year of the *Brāhmanas* and the *Vedāngas* consisted of 366 days and a quarter-year was thus of 91 5 days If the *Kṛttikās* or *Pleiades* were at the vernal equinox, then a full moon at the *Kṛttikās* would be on the day of autumnal equinox, and the winter solstice day should come after 91 5 days according to this mode of reckoning Now in order to interpret the *Mahābhārata* astronomical references we take a gauge year in which the full-moon of *Kārttika* took place very near to the *Kṛttikās* , this year would be 1934-35 A D The day of full-moon of *Kārttika* would correspond with 21st November, 1934 The predicted day of winter solstice would correspond with the *21st of February* According to the *Mahābhārata* references, the anniversary of the last day of the Bhārata battle would be January 6, 1935 and of the winter solstice day the date would be the *25th February, 1935* There would thus be a clear *difference of 4 days between the estimated winter solstice day and the*

Mahābhārata-stated winter solstice day[1] Here if we take the *Mahābhārata* date for winter solstice to be correct, we get a total precession of the solstice-day amounting to 65 days, representing a lapse of 4810 years till 1935 A.D., and the date of the battle is pushed up to 2876 B.C., nearly, which gets no anchorage at either of the Āryabhata or the Vṛddha-Garga tradition. Hence the above hypothesis cannot explain the possible finding of the *Mahābhārata* references as used in this chapter, by the epic compiler or his astronomical assistant of 400 B.C.

It is thus established that the *Mahābhārata* references used by us for finding the date of the Bhārata battle, cannot be taken as interpolation by the epic compiler of about 400 B.C. They were, in my opinion, the integral parts of the Pāndava saga which formed the nucleus for the older *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhārata* and were finally included in the great epic when it was first formed about 400 B.C. These references have, therefore, been taken as really observed astronomical events or phenomena, made in the battle year itself and which were incorporated in the original Pāndava saga.

Conclusion

We have thus come to the most definite conclusion that the Bhārata battle did actually take place in,—2526 of Saka era or 2449 B.C. For one single event only one date is possible. We trust, the problem of finding this date from the *Mahābhārata* data, has been satisfactorily solved in this work for the first time. The date arrived at makes the event as contemporary with the Indus valley civilization. In the *Mahābhārata*, we get many references to show that *Rākṣasas*, *Asuras* and the Aryan Hindus had their Kingdoms side by side. In *Vana-parva* or Book III, chapters 13—22 give us a description of the destruction of *Saubha Purī* by Kṛṣṇa. This may mean the destruction of a city like Mahenjo Dāro. The Bhārata battle was a pre-historic event and the Purānic dynastic lists relating to this period

[1] By the mean reckoning the number of days from the full moon day of *Kārttika* to the 7th day of the dark half of *Māgha* = 29.5 × 3 + 7 = 95.5 days and 95.5 da − 91.5 da is also = 4 days.

cannot be taken as correct. They are mere conjectures and could be accepted only when they could be verified from other more reliable sources. There are undoubtedly several gaps in these lists, which have yet to be accounted for. In many cases, wrong traditions may be found repeated in many books; they all may be echoes of one statement and are not acceptable.[1] Not such are the *Mahābhārata* references which we have collected from the *Udyoga* to the *Anuśāsana parva*. We trust, my thesis stands on solid astronomical basis selected with the greatest care and discrimination. The misinterpretations of the commentator have been, on some occasions, confounding for a time.

The historical methods are often liable to very serious errors by wrong identification of persons from a similarity of names. The astronomer Parāśara, probably a man of the first and second centuries of the Christian era, was wrongly identified with Parāśara, the father of Vyāsa, the common ancestor of the Kauravas and the Pāndavas, by the earliest researchers, Sir Wm Jones, Wilford, Davis and Pratt.[2] They based their calculation on the statement of this Parāśara, the astronomer, as to the position of the solstices; their calculation has but given an approximate date of an astronomical event, but neither the time of the Pāndavas nor of the astronomer Parāśara. Such mistakes have been made by many subsequent researchers, who have used the sameness or similarity of names as a basis for a historical conclusion. Not such are the astronomical references used in this paper. They are all definite in meaning and, as we have said already, for an event of which the date is not recorded in a reliable historical work, no better evidence of date is possible. Our examination in the light of these references fully corroborates the date recorded by Varāhamihira whose statement must now be regarded as more reliable than those of the host of the writers of the *Purānas* of unknown name and time.

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[1] For a full discussion of Purānic evidences the reader is referred to Chapter III.

[2] *Asiatic Researches*, Vol II, etc., *cf* also JASB, for 1862 A D, p 51. Also Brennand's Hindu Astronomy, Ch IX, pp 112-125.

A note on the selection of astronomical references from the Mahābhārata for

The Date of the Bhārata-Battle

In our selection of astronomical data in the present chapter no use has been made of those that are found in chapter 143 of the *Udyogaparva* and in chapter 3 of the *Bhīsmaparva* [1] I have understood them to be mere astrological effusions of bad omens, they are also inconsistent in themselves, and as such they cannot have any bearing as to the date of Bhārata-battle These are —

प्राजापत्यं हि नक्षत्रं ग्रहस्तीक्ष्णो महाद्युतिः ।
शनैश्चरः पीड्यति पीड्यन् प्राणिनोऽधिकम् ॥८॥
कृत्वा चाङ्गारको वक्रं ज्येष्ठायां मधुसूदन ।
अनुराधा प्रार्थयते मैत्रं सगमयन्निव ॥९॥
विशेषेण हि वार्ष्णेय चित्रां पीडयते ग्रहः ।
सोमस्य लक्ष्म व्यावृत्तं राहुरर्कमुपैति च ॥१०॥

Udyogaparva, 143

"The planet Saturn which is acute (*tīksna*) and of great effulgence oppresses the star (*Rohinī* or *Aldebaran*) of which the presiding deity is Prajāpati, and causes great affliction to living beings O slayer of Madhu (Krsna), Mars having taken retrograde motion near to *Jyesthā* (or *Antares*) has now approached the star-group *Anurādhā* ('junction star' δ *Scorpionis*) or has already reached it of which the presiding deity is *Mitra* More specially, O descendant of Visni, a planet troubles the star *Citrā* (α *Virginis*) The marks on the moon are changed and the node (*Rāhu*) is reaching the sun"

Here Saturn is indicated to have been in opposition, Saturn being near *Rohinī*, the sun must be near to the star *Jyesthā* (*Antares*) Again Mars is spoken of as in the *naksatra* *Anurādhā*

[1] See Appendix (V) to "An Indian Ephimeris, A D 700 to A D 1799 by Diwan Bahadur L D Swamikannu Pillai, I S O, pp 479 83

and is retrograde, hence the sun must be nearly opposite to it and near to the star group *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*). The inconsistency of the statements is apparent. A planet which is not named is spoken of as have neared to α *Virginis*. All this is mere astrological effusion stating evil omens, and cannot have any chronological bearing. We next turn to another similar statement in the *Bhīsmaparva*, chapter 3

श्वेतो ग्रहस्तथा चित्रा समतिक्रम्य तिष्ठति ॥१२॥
धूमकेतुर्महाघोरः पुष्यं चाक्रम्य तिष्ठति ॥१३॥
मघास्वङ्गारको वक्रः श्रवणे च बृहस्पतिः ।
भगं नक्षत्रमाक्रम्य सूर्यपुत्रेण पीड्यते ॥१४॥
शुक्रः प्रोष्ठपदे पूर्वे समारुह्य विरोचते ॥१५॥
रोहिणी पीडयत्येवमुभौ च शशिभास्करौ ।
चित्रास्वात्यन्तरे चैव विष्टितः परुषग्रहः ॥१७॥
वक्रानुवक्रं कृत्वा च श्रवणं पावकप्रभः ।
ब्रह्मराशिं समावृत्य लोहिताङ्गो व्यवस्थितः ॥१८॥
संवत्सरस्थायिनौ च ग्रहौ प्रज्वलितावुभौ ।
विशाखायाः समीपस्थौ बृहस्पतिशनैश्चरौ ॥२७॥

"The white planet (Venus) stands by passing over the star *Citrā* (α *Virginis*). A dreadful comet is stationed at the star group *Pusyā*. Mars retrograde is in the *Maghās*, and Jupiter in *Śravanā* division. The son of Sun (Saturn) oppresses the *naksatra Bhaga* (*P. Phalgunī*) by overtaking it. Venus in the *naksatra Prosthapada* (*P. Bhādrapada*) shines there. Both the sun and moon oppress the star or *naksatra Rohinī*. A cruel planet is stationed at the junction of the *Citrā* and *Svātī naksatras*. The ruddy planet (Mars) looking like fire having got the even motion at *Śravanā* stands by overpowering the *naksatra* Brahmā. Stationed near the *Viśākhās*, both Jupiter and Saturn are seen burning as it were and would continue so for one year".

We tabulate below the positions of the planets in the two references.—

Planet	Position in Naksatra in Ref I	Position in Naksatra in Ref II	
Saturn	Rohinī	P Phalgunī or Visākhās	
Mars	Anurādhā	Maghā or Rohinī	
Sun	Jyesthā or Krttikā	Rohinī or Dhanisthā	(i e, opposite to Maghā)
Moon		Rohinī	
Unnamed Planet	Citrā	Bet Citrā & Svātī	
A Node	Near to *Jyesthā*		
Venus		P Bhādrapada or Citrā	
Jupiter		Śravanā or Visākhā	

All this is hopelessly inconsistent astrological effusions of evil omens fit for Mother Goose's Tales only Still something of chronology of the Bhārata battle was attempted by late Mr Lele from them for which the reader in referred to Dīksita's भारतीय ज्योति शास्त्र, pp 119-20 (1st edn), the date arrived at by him was 2127 years before 3102 B C —a most fantastic result ! His finding of the positions of planets does not also agree with the abovementioned positions indicated in the *Mahābhārata* as explained already

We again have the two statements —

(*a*) राहुरग्रसदादित्यमपर्वणि विशाम्पते ॥१९॥

M.Bh , *Sabhā*, Ch 79

(*b*) राहुश्चाग्रसदादित्यमपर्वणि विशाम्पते ॥१०॥

M Bh , *Śalya*, Ch 59

i e., " Rāhu (also) eclipsed the sun, O king, when it was not a new-moon "

These statements are also mere poetic effusions In *Bhīsma parva*, Chapter III, we have another statement which says —

चन्द्रसूर्यावुभौ ग्रस्तावेकमासी त्रयोदशीम् ॥३२॥

' The moon and the sun were eclipsed in one month on the 13th day of either half "

We cannot put any faith in any statement of this chapter of the *Mahābhārata* Two eclipses, one of the moon followed by the other of the sun in a fortnight, are not of very rare occurrence In the year 2451 B C two such occurred —

(1) On Aug 30, 2451 B C at 18 hrs G M T , or Kuruksetra mean time 23 hrs 8 min

Mean Sun=137° 54′ 51″ 56, ,, Moon=317° 48′ 47″ 99, Lunar Perigee=101° 13′ 35″ 60, ,, A-Node=144° 37′ 5″ 51, Sun's Apogee=27° 1′ 52″ ,, eccentricity= 018331	Hence there was a lunar eclipse on this day visible at Kuruksetra, and it was of no small magnitude

Again on Sept 14, 2451 B C at G M T 0 hr or 5-8 A M Kuruksetra Mean Time

Mean Sun=151° 57′ 35″ 28, ,, Moon=145° 14′ 37″ 54, Lunar Perigee=102° 48′ 50″ 59, A-Node=143° 51′ 48″ 96	This solar eclipse is discussed in a subsequent chapter It was visible in the morning from Kuruksetra

Now on Aug. 16, 2451 B C at G M T 0 hr or K M time 5-8 A M.

Mean Sun=123° 22′ 33″ 69, ,, Moon=123° 7′ 41″ 32, L-Perigee=99° 35′ 0″ 08, A-Node=145° 23′ 57″ 36	N M happened about 8 hours before

Hence the N M happened on Aug 15, at K M time 21-8 nearly The moon was not visible on the 16th The days of the month were reckoned from 17th or 18th Aug 2451 B C , the lunar eclipse fell on Aug 30 and the solar eclipse on Sept 14, 2451 B C The eclipses in question happened two years before

the date of the Bhārata battle as ascertained in this chapter, *viz*, 2449 B.C[1]

Note 2—Comparison of the Mahābhārata statements of Planetary positions with those calculated for 2449 B C, the year of the Bhārata battle

In this connection we think it necessary to examine all the *Mahābhārata* statements of planetary positions at the different times of the year of the Bhārata battle, and compare them with the planetary positions in 2449 B C on the following dates — (*a*) October 14, 2449 B C, on the morning of which Kṛsna met Karna as described in the *Udyoga-parva*, chapters 142 and 143 as quoted already on page 26, (*b*) November 3, 2449 B C, *i e*, on the evening preceding the first day of the battle for which the planetary positions are stated in chapters 2 and 3 of the *Bhīsma-parva* of which those in chapter 3 have been quoted on page 27, and (*c*) November 21, 2449 B C for which the planetary positions are found in chapter 94 of the *Karna-parva*. We now quote below one stanza from the *Bhīsma-parva*, chapter 2, stating the position of Saturn, thus

रोहिणीं पीडयन्नेष स्थितो राजन् शनैश्चर. ।
व्यावृत्तलक्ष्मसोमस्य भविष्यति महद्भयम् ॥३२॥

"O king, Saturn (the slow-going planet) stands oppressing the star *Rohinī* (*Aldebaran*) the moon's marks are reversed great dangers are imminent"

Again in the *Karna-parva*, we have—

हते कर्णे सरितो न प्रसस्रुर्जगाम चास्तं सविता दिवाकरः ।
श्वेतो ग्रहश्च ज्वलनार्कवर्ण सोमस्य पुत्रोऽभ्युदियाय तिर्य्यक् ॥४९॥
बृहस्पति· सपरिवार्य्य रोहिणीम् बभूव चन्द्रार्कसमो विशाम्पते ॥५१॥

Mah Karna, 94, 49 and 51

[1] In pages 482 83 of his work on "Indian Ephemeris" Diwan Bāhadur L D Swamikannu Pillai, I S O, lends some support to the above finding of the date of the Bhārata battle—Mm Sudhākara Dvivedī also accepted that the Bhārata battle was fought and the reign of Yudhisthira began in 2449 B C, *vide* his edition of the *Maha Siddhānta*, Contents, pp 1 8

"When Karna was killed the streamlets ceased to flow and the sun set The white planet (Venus) became of the colour of fire and Sun (combust or heliacally set?) and the son of Moon (i e Mercury) became heliacally visible obliquely"

"Jupiter surrounding the star *Rohinī* (*Aldebaran*) became as bright as the sun and the moon"

The planetary positions according to our calculations are exhibited below —

Planet	October 11, 6 A M K M T		Nov 3, G M N or K M T, 17hrs 8 mins		Nov 21, 6 A M K M T	
	Longitudes of Planets	Ref stars with longs	Longitudes of Planets	Ref stars with longs	Longitudes of Planets	Ref stars with longs
Sun	181° 10′	δ Scorpii 181° 1	202° 1′	λ Scorpii 203° 5	219° 59′	σ Sagitter 220° 53′
Moon	85° 22′	α Leonis 88° 20	3° 31′	α Tauri 8° 17′	237° 59′	α Aquila 240° 16
Mercury	199° 45′	λ Scorpii 203° 5	215° 14′	δ Sagitter 213° 5′	199° 22′	λ Scorpii 203° 5
Venus	176° 7′	δ Scorpii 181° 2′	200° 56′	λ Scorpii 203° 5′	223° 52′	σ Sagitter 220° 53
Mars	144° 4′	α Virginis 142° 18′	157° 45′	α Libra 163° 35′	169° 33′	ι Libra 169° 30′
Jupiter	11° 25′	α Tauri 8° 17′	8° 36	α Tauri 8° 17′	7° 56′	α Tauri 8° 17
Saturn	357° 59′	η Tauri 358° 30′	356° 27′	η Tauri 358° 30	355° 21′	η Tauri 358° 30′

a Virginis, but is not given any name. Venus stands throughout in the position of "Combust" or heliacal setting. Mercury was visible a little before the sunrise on Nov. 21, morning. On Nov. 3, at evening the moon is oppressing the stars *Rohini*, while the sun standing at 202° 4′ may be taken to "oppress" another *Rohini* which was *Antares* called also *Jyesthā* of which the longitude was 188° 16′ nearly. It seems that in the *Udyoga*, 143, the verses 8 and 10 speak the truth and in *Bhīsma*, 2, the stanza 32, and in *Bhisma*, 3, the stanza 17 alone, tell the correct positions. In the *Karna-parva*, 94, the verses quoted are verified by our calculations. The *Mahābhārata* statements of planetary positions are thus found to be full of "truths and fiction" and I trust, in our selection of data for the year of the Bhārata battle, we have been able to avoid "fiction" and to accept the true astronomical events on which our finding of the year as 2449 B. C., has been based.

The last but not the least important astronomical indication is that Yudhisthira was consecrated for the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice which was year-long and used to be begun with the beginning of spring (astronomical, when the Sun's longitude became 330°). The date in question is stated to be *Citrāpūrnamāsa* (चित्रापूर्णमास) or the day of the full-moon near the star *a Virginis* or *Citrā*. Consistently with our finding the year of the *Bhārata* battle as 2449 B. C., the date for Yudhisthira's consecration for the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice becomes—

March 11, 2446 B. C., on which at G. M. N. or K. M. T. 17 hrs. 8 mins.

True Sun = 329° 42′ 27″	Astronomical spring begins in
,, Moon = 144° 35′ nearly	about 7 hrs. and F. M. in about
a Virginis = 142° 23′	10 hrs.

This was the day of the full-moon which is spoken of in the *Aśvamedhaparva*, Ch. 72, thus.

चैत्र्यां हि पौर्णमास्या तु तव दीक्षा भविष्यति ॥४॥

"Your consecration will be on the day of the full-moon at *Citrā* (*a Virginis*)."

In this year of 2446 B C , the winter solstice fell on Jan 9, on which at G M N.,

$$\text{Appt Sun} = 269^\circ\ 59'\ 42''$$

The Māgha full-moon came two days later on Jan. 11, 2449 B C , on which at G M N ,

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Appt Sun} &= 271^\circ\ 49'\ 49'' \\ \text{,, Moon} &= 90^\circ\ 43' \text{ nearly} \\ \alpha \text{ Leonis} &= 88^\circ\ 22' \end{aligned}$$

It is evident, this astronomical indication also corroborates that the Bhārata battle was fought in 2449 B C

This note exhausts the discussion of all the time-indications as can be traced in the Mahābhārata for finding the year of the Bhārata-battle

CHAPTER II

DATE OF THE BHĀRATA-BATTLE

Bhārata-Battle Traditions (A)

As quoted in Chapter I, there are three traditions as to the date of the Bhārata battle, *viz*, (1) the Āryabhata tradition that it was fought in 3102-01 B C, (2) the Vriddha Garga tradition that the Yudhisthira era began from 2449 B C, and (3) the *Purānic* tradition or traditions which variously state that the time-interval between the birth of Parīksit to the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda, was either 1,015, 1,050, 1,115 or even 1,500 years

In the previous chapter, it has been shown that the astronomical references from the *Mahābhārata* justify the conclusion that the very zero year of King Yudhisthira's era was the date of the Bhārata battle or that the great fight took place in 2449 B C itself In the present chapter we propose to examine critically the first of the other two traditions

1 *The Āryabhata Tradition*

Āryabhata I (499 A D) in his *Daśagītikā*[1] has said that 'of the present *Kalpa* or Æon, six *Manus*, 27 *Mahāyugas* and three quarter *Yugas* were elapsed before the Bhārata Thursday' The three quarter *Yugas* were *Krta*, *Tretā* and *Dvāpara* which elapsed before some Thursday in the time of the Pāndavas which was connected with the time of the Bhārata battle There are indeed certain statements in the *Mahābhārata* itself which say

[1] *Āryabhatīya, Daśagītikā, 3, loc cit*, Chap I, p 14

that the battle was fought at the junction of *Kali* and *Dvāpara* ages —

(1) 'The battle between the Kuru and the Pāndava armies was fought at Syamantapañcaka when it was the junction (*antara*) of the *Kali* and *Dvāpara* ages '[1]

(2) 'This is *Kaliyuga* by name which has just begun (or which will just begin) '[2]

(3) 'You should know that the *Kaliyuga* has begun and also of the oath the Pāndava (Bhīma) had taken before so let the Pāndava have freedom from the debt (*ānṛnya*) of his word of honour and of his enmity '[3]

These passages show that there was a *Kali*-reckoning from about the time of the Bhārata battle This *Kaliyuga* which we choose to call the *Mahābhārata Kaliyuga* cannot be identified with the Astronomical *Kaliyuga* for the following reasons —

(a) *Astronomical Kaliyuga an Astronomical Fiction*

At the beginning of the astronomical *Kaliyuga*, all the mean places of the planets, *viz* , the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, are taken to have been in conjunction at the beginning of the Hindu sphere , the moon's apogee and her ascending node at respectively a quarter circle and a half circle ahead of the same initial point Under such a conjunction of all the planets there should also be a total eclipse of the sun , but no such things happened at that time The beginning of the *Kaliyuga* was the midnight at Ujjayinī terminating the 17th February of 3102 B C , according to *Sūrya Siddhānta*[4] and the *ārdharātrika* system of Āryabhata's astronomy as described in

[1] अन्तरे चैव सम्प्राप्ते कलिद्वापरयोरभूत ।
स्यमन्तपञ्चके युद्ध कुरुपाण्डवसेनयो ॥

—*M Bh* , *Ādi*, 2, 13

[2] एतत् कलियुग नाम अचिराद्द यत् प्रवर्त्तते ।

—*M Bh* , *Vana*, 149, 39

[3] प्राप्त कलियुग विद्धि प्रतिज्ञा पाण्डवस्य च ।
आनृण्य यातु वैरस्य प्रतिज्ञायाश्च पाण्डव ॥

—*M Bh* , *Śalya*, 61, 23

[4] Burgess s Translation of the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, Cal Univ , Reprint, p. 19

the *Khandakhādyaka* of Brahmagupta [1] Again this *Kaliyuga* is said to have begun, according to the *Āryabhatīya*,[2] from the sunrise at Lankā (supposed to be on the equator and on the same meridian with Ujjain)—from the mean sunrise on the 18th February, 3102 B C

Now astronomical events of the type described above and more specially the conjunction of the sun and the moon cannot happen both at midnight and at the next mean sunrise This shows that this *Kaliyuga* had an unreal beginning

The researches of Bailey, Bentley and Burgess have shown that a conjunction of all the 'planets' did not happen at the beginning of this *Kaliyuga* Burgess rightly observes 'it seems hardly to admit of a doubt that the epoch (the beginning of the astronomical *Kaliyuga*) was arrived at by astronomical calculation carried backward '[3]

We also can corroborate the findings of above researchers in the following way and by using the most up to date equations for the planetary mean elements

Now by using the *Khandakhādyaka* methods, we readily find that—

On April 13, 1938, *Kali Ahargana*=1840537,

and the J D number on that date=2429002

∴ Julian day number on the beg of *Kaliyuga*=588465

,, January 1, 1900 A D =2415021

The difference in days =1826556

=50 J C.+306 days

Now the precession of the equinoxes from 3102 B C to 499 A D or Āryabhata's time works out to have been=49° 32′ 39″ The mean planetary elements at the beginning of the *Kaliyuga*, i e, 17th February, 3102 B C, Ujjayinī mean time 24 hrs are

[1] P C Sengupta's Translation of the '*Khandakhadyaka*,' Cal Univ Press, Introduction, pp xiv, *seq*, *cf* also p 9, also all the rules for finding the mean places of planets in Chapters I and II

[2] 'बुधाह्न्यजार्कोदयाच्च लङ्कायाम्'

—*Dasagitika*, 2

[3] Burgess's *Surya Siddhanta*, Cal Univ, Reprint, p 20

worked out and shown below We have added 49° 32′ 39″ to these mean tropical longitudes arrived at from the rules used, so as to get the longitudes measured from the vernal equinox of Āryabhata's time

Planet	Mean tropical Longitudes on February 17, U M T 24 hrs 3102 B C Moderns	Longitudes at the same time measured from the Vernal equinox of 499 A D, i e, Āryabhata's time	The same as assumed in the Ārdharātrika system at the same time as before, and also at next mean sunrise on Feb 18 in the Audayika system	Error in the assumption of Āryabhata and also of the modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* and the *Khandakhādyaka*
Sun	301° 40′ 9 22″	351° 12 48″	0° 0′ 0″	+ 8° 47′ 12″
Moon	305 38 13 81	355 10 53	0 0 0	+ 4 49 7
Moon's Apogee	44 25 27 66	93 58 7	90 0 0	− 3 58 7
,, Node	147 20 15 05	196 52 54	180 0 0	−16 52 54
Mercury	268 24 1 65	317 56 41	0 0 0	+42 3 19
Venus	334 44 50 25	24 17 29	0 0 0	−24 17 29
Mars	290 2 54 67	339 35 34	0 0 0	+20 24 26
Jupiter	318 39 45 74	8 12 25	0 0 0	− 8 12 25
Saturn	282 24 15 07	331 56 54	0 0 0	+28 3 6

Hence we see that the assumed positions of the mean planets at the beginning of the astronomical *Kaliyuga* were really incorrect and the assumption was not a reality But of what use this assumption was in Āryabhata's time, *i e*, 499 A D., is now set forth below

Āryabhata says[1] that when he was 23 years old, 3,600 years of Kali had elapsed According to his *Ārdharātrika* system—

$$3600 \text{ years} = \frac{1}{1200} \text{ of a } \textit{Mahāyuga} = 1314931\ 5 \text{ days}$$

Again according to his *Audayika* system,

$$3600 \text{ years} = \frac{1}{1200} \text{ of a } \textit{Mahāyuga} = 1314931\ 25 \text{ days}$$

[1] The reference is quoted later on.

Hence according to both these systems of astronomy of Āryabhata, by counting 3,600 years from the beginning of the astronomical *Kali* epoch, we arrive at the date March 21, 499 A D , Ujjayinī mean time, 12 noon The unreality of the *Kali* epoch is also evident from this finding. However, the mean planets at this time work out as given below —

Date March 21, 499 A D —Ujjayinī Mean Midday

Planet	Mean Long *Ārdharātrika* system	Mean Long *Audayika* system	Mean Long Moderns	Error in the *Audayika* system
Sun	0° 0′ 0″	0° 0′ 0″	359° 42′ 5″	+ 17′ 55″
Moon	280 48 0	280 48 0	280 24 52	+ 23 8
Moon's Apogee	35 42 0	35 42 0	35 24 38	+ 17 22
,, Node	352 12 0	352 12 0	352 2 26	+ 9 34
Mercury	180 0 0*	186 0 0*	183 9 51	+ 2° 50′ 9″
Venus	356 24 0	356 24 0	356 7 51	+ 16 9
Mars	7 12 0	7 12 0	6 52 45	+ 19 15
Jupiter	186 0 0	187 12 0	187 10 47	+ 1 13
Saturn	49 12 0	49 12 0	48 21 13	+ 50 47

It is thus clear that the beginning of the Hindu Astronomical *Kaliyuga* was the result of a back calculation wrong in its data, and was thus started wrongly

It is also established that the astronomical *Kaliyuga*-reckoning is a pure astronomical fiction created for facilitating the Hindu astronomical calculations and was designed to be correct only for 499 A D [1] This *Kali*-reckoning cannot be earlier than the date when the Hindu scientific *Siddhāntas* really came into being

* The mean of these two longitudes is almost the same as the corresponding figure in the next column

[1] P C Sengupta—Translation of the Khandakhādyaka, Introduction, p XIX—
अस्मिन् काले गोलिकोक्तभगणैर्ग्रहाणिकेनागतो ग्रहमध्यमेऽसपाता स्फुटा स्यु इत उत्तर तद्यागोतेषु तेषु सम्प्रदायसिद्ध संस्कार कार्य ॥
—Observation by Sūryadeva Yajvan, the commentator of the *Āryabhaṭīya*

As this conclusion cannot but be true, no Sanskrit work or epigraphic evidences would be forthcoming as to the use of this astronomical *Kali*-reckoning prior to the date 499 A D

(b) *Astronomical Kali-reckoning a Possible Creation of Āryabhata I*

As has been said before, Āryabhata I in his *Kālakriyā* says, ' Now when 3,600 years and three quarter *yugas* had elapsed, 23 years were over since my birth '[1] We may interpret how he could arrive at 3,600 years of *Kaliyuga* elapsed, when he was 23 years old, in the following way —

Varāhamihira in his *Pañcasiddhāntikā* says that the longitude of *Maghā* (*Regulus*) was 126° [2] This was probably known to Āryabhata I as we feel inclined to conclude that it was the old *Sūrya-Siddhānta* that was quoted by Varāha when stating the ' polar ' longitude of the seven ' junction ' stars in his work In Pāndava time further, it is stated in many places in Sanskrit literature that ' the *rsis* or the stars of the Great Bear were conjoined with the *Maghās* ' Āryabhata I may have assumed from it that the summer solsticial colure of the Pāndava time passed straight through the star *Maghā* or *Regulus* [3] for which the longitude was known in his time most probably as 126° as measured from the vernal equinox In Pāndava time its assumed value was taken at 90° This would show a solsticial shifting of 36° If we assume further that Āryabhata knew of Ptolemy's precession rate of 1° per 100 years, the time from the year of the battle to Āryabhata I's time (499 A D) would be 3,600 years The battle year would then be 3102 B C. Thus we see that Āryabhata I may have made the statement about ' Bhārata Thursday ' depending not on an actual tradition handed down to his time, but on some wrong back calculation based on an incorrect assumption about the

[1] षष्ट्यब्दाना षष्टिर्यदा व्यतीतास्त्रयश्च युगपादा ।
त्र्यधिका विंशतिरब्दास्तदेह मम जन्मनोऽतीताः ॥
—*Āryabhatīya*, *Kālakriyā*, 10

[2] पित्र्यस्य स्वर्चेदे षष्ठे चाग्रे समायोगः ।
—*Pañcasiddhāntikā*, Chapter XIV

[3] An accurate calculation on this hypothesis would lead to the year 2350 B C

position of the solstices of the Pāndava time, and an incorrect annual rate of precession of the equinoxes transmitted to India at that time

(c) *Conflict of Āryabhata Tradition with Mahābhārata Evidences*

It is readily seen that the year 3102-01 B C was similar to 1935-36 A D [1] In 1935 the new-moon near *Antares* took place on the 26th November, 1935 The anniversary of Bhīsma's expiry which came 81 days later, therefore fell on the 15th February in 1936 The total shifting of the solstices up to 1935 A D from 3102 B C works out to be 69°32′ nearly The sun had the tropical longitude of 339°32′ (=270°+69°32′) at about noon (Calcutta) of the 29th February, 1936, the day following which corresponded with the day of Bhīsma's expiry as far as the solstices are concerned Hence if we take the year of the Kuruksetra battle to be 3102 B C, the day of Bhīsma's expiry becomes 14 or 15 days before the sun's turning north Thus 3102 B C for the year of the Bhārata battle becomes an absurdity as judged by the *Mahābhārata* references

We thus see that the Āryabhata tradition that the Bhārata battle was fought in 3102 B C is an impossible proposition First of all this astronomical *Kali*-reckoning is a pure astronomical myth created with a definite purpose It was the result of a back calculation wrong in its data, the reckoning itself cannot be traced to a date possibly earlier than 499 A D, a creation most probably of Āryabhata I The beginning year of the astronomical *Kaliyuga* or 3102 B C is at serious conflict with the *Mahābhārata* evidences we have used for determining the year of the Bhārata battle Hence Āryabhata tradition is totally untenable

(d) *Mahābhārata Kaliyuga*

As the *Mahābhārata* says that the Bhārata battle was fought at junction (*antara*) of the *Kali* and *Dvāpara* ages, we should now try to ascertain when this *Mahābhārata Kaliyuga* was started

[1] The number of years between 3102 B C and 1935 A D
= 5036 years (sidereal) = 1939 × 2 + 160 × 7 + 19 × 2 years

The beginning of the five-yearly luni-solar cycles or *yugas* of the *Vedāngas* is associated with the day of the winter solstice thus —

'When the sun, the moon and the *naksatra Dhanisthā* (*Delphinis*) ascend the heavens together, it is the beginning of the *Yuga* (cycle), of the month of *Māgha* or *Tapas*, of the light half and of the sun's northerly course "[1]

Again all Hindu calendars and the *Purānas*[2] say that the *Kaliyuga* began with full-moon day of *Māgha* This *Kali*-beginning was quite different from the astronomical *Kali* epoch, the later started from the light-half of *Caitra*, *i e* , from Feb 17-18, 3102 B C Judging by the beginning of the luni-solar cycles of the Vedānga period, we should identify the day of the winter solstice with the full-moon day of *Māgha*, in finding the beginning of the *Kaliyuga* which is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas*

Now we assume that the *Purānic Kaliyuga* was started from the full-moon day of the *standard month of Māgha*, of which we have spoken before,[3] and that day was also the day of the winter solstice We also understand that it is the same *Kali yuga* of which the reference is found in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas*

We agree to accept that this standard month of *Māgha* happened in our own time in 1924 A D from the 5th of February to the 5th of March, with the characteristics, *viz* , that it began

1 स्वराक्रमेते सोमार्कौ यदा साक सवासवौ ।
स्यात्तदादियुग माघस्तप शुक्लोऽयन ह्युदक् ॥

—*Yājusa Jyautisa*, 6

2 वैशाखमासस्य तु या तृतीया नवम्यसौ कार्त्तिकशुक्लपक्षे ।
नभस्यमासस्य तमिस्रपक्षे त्रयोदशी पञ्चदशी च माघे ॥
एता युगाद्या कथिताः पुराणैरनन्तपुण्यास्तिथयश्चतस्रः ॥

—*Visnupurāna*, III, 14, 12 13

also

वैशाखस्य तृतीया या नवमी कार्त्तिकस्य च ।
पञ्चदशी च माघस्य नभस्ये च त्रयोदशी ।
युगादयः स्मृता ह्येते दत्तस्याक्षय्यकारिका ॥

—*Matsya Purāna*, 17, 4 5

3 *Vide* Chapter I, page 21

with the New-moon at the beginning of the *Dhaniṣṭhā* cluster, had its Full-moon near the *Maghās* and the Last Quarter conjoined with *Jyeṣṭhā* or *Antares*

Now according to our finding the year of Bhārata battle was 2449 B C and in so far as the moon's phases near to the fixed stars are concerned it was similar to 1929 A D [1] Hence 2454 B C was in the same way similar to 1924 A D

It was in 2454 B C, on the 9th January, that a full-moon happened At Greenwich mean noon or 5-8 p m Kurukṣetra time on that date the apparent longitudes were for

Sun=269° 36′,
Moon=86° 16′, nearly

The moon was ahead of the sun by 176° 40′ nearly, and the full-moon happened in about 7½ hours at about 1° 15′ ahead of the star *Regulus* or *Maghā* The sun reached the winter solstice 2½ hours later The day of the winter solstice and the full-moon day were the same day according to *Mahābhārata* convention [2] of its ending with the sunrise

Most likely the *Mahābhārata Kaliyuga* truly began from this year of 2454 B C, 10th January, when the Pāndavas were still on exile The year of the Bhārata battle or 2449 B C marked the end of five-yearly cycle, was within the *sandhi* or junction of the *Dvāpara* and *Kali* ages This *sandhi* was a period which was taken to last a hundred years, *i e*, till about 2354 B C most likely During this period men were uncertain when the *Kaliyuga* began Hence the year of Bhārata battle coming five years after 2454 B C was itself taken as the beginning of the *Kaliyuga* The year of Kṛṣṇa's expiry coming 36 years [3] after the great battle and 41 years (=38+3) after 2454 B C was also a beginning of the *Kaliyuga* [4] In these years also the day of the winter solstice was not much removed from the full-moon day

[1] The foregoing chapter, p 12 *et seq*
[2] *M Bh*, *Aśvamedha*, 11,2
[3] *M Bh*, *Mausala*, Ch 1
[4] यस्मिन् कृष्णो दिवं यातस्तस्मिन्नेव तदाहनि ।
प्रतिपन्नं कलियुगं , ...

—*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, IV, 24, 110,

of *Māgha* Hence followed a 'rule of the thumb' that in this period, whenever the standard month of *Māgha* should apparently return, the day of the full-moon was taken as the winter solstice day

As an illustration of how the above 'rule of the thumb' was followed for predicting the winter solstice day in Pāndava time, we have already considered the words of Krsna as to the expected day of Bhīsma's expiry in Chapter I [1] We propose to discuss it again by back calculation

It has been shown that the observed day of winter solstice must have been the same as the *Māgha* full-moon day of 9th to 10th January, 2454 B C After the completion of the five yearly luni-solar cycle in 2449 B C, there was apparently a return of the standard month of *Māgha* The full-moon fell on the 14th January, 2449 B C on which at G M. noon —

Appt Sun=274° 53′
,, Moon=90° 39′ nearly.

Thus the full-moon happened about 8½ hrs later This 14th of January was the estimated day of the winter solstice for the year 2449 B C, but it could not be the accurately determined solstice day Now the Vedic year was of 366 days or 12 lunations *plus* 12 nights If we count 366 days from January 14, 2449 B C, we arrive at the estimated day of the winter solstice as January 14, 2448 B C The first day of the sun's northerly course (as estimated) would be January 15, 2448 B C, as the day for Bhīsma's expiry Now the battle ended on the 21st November, 2449 B C The number of days between these dates becomes 55 days But one day more was probably included in this period in the following way —

We have shown in Chapter I, that in the year 2449 B C., the calendar authorities of the Pāndava time, most probably began the reckoning of the lunar month of *Pausa* from the 20th of November [2] Hence between this date and the expected day of Bhīsma's expiry, the 28th day of lunar Māgha to come, there would be 29 5+28=57 5 days (here the estimated day of winter

[1] *M Bh*, *Sānti*, 51, 44, *loc cit.*
[2] Chapter I, p 19

solstice was the 27th day of lunar Māgha and Bhīsma was to expire on the following day) Now reckoning from the day on which the battle ended till this expected day of the sun's northerly course there would be 56 or 57 days This would explain Kisna's prediction about the expiry of Bhīsma, most probably made on the date on which the battle ended or on the day following

(e) *Evidence of the Mahābhārata Kali-reckoning*

A question may now be asked if there is any evidence that this *Mahābhārata Kali*-reckoning was current in India for some time The following instances may be cited —

(1) A verse quoted in a work named the *Laghu Bhāgavatāmrta* by Rūpa Gosvāmī, thus speaks of the time when the Buddha was accepted as an incarnation of Visnu[1] —

'He was revealed when 2,000 years of the *Kaliyuga* had elapsed, his form was of a brown colour, two-handed and bald-headed'

Now the Buddha's Nirvāna took place according to the latest authorities at his age of eighty in 483 B C[2] He was thus born in 563 B C, and began preaching the truth that came to him when he was thirty-five or about 528 B C Two thousand years before the Nirvāna year was the date 2483 B C, and our finding of the year of the battle is 2449 B C Hence according to the rough statement quoted above a *Kali*-reckoning was started near about the year of the battle

(2) Again all orthodox Bengali almanacs record that[3] in the *Kali* age, kings Yudhisthira, Parīksit, Janamejaya, Śatānīka, Vikramāditya and others of the *lunar* race, 120 in number, ruled for 3,695 years 3 months and 18 days till the Muhammadan conquest (of Bengal presumably, as it is essentially a Bengal tradition) The Sena dynasty of Bengal, which claimed its descent

[1] असौ व्यक्तः कलेरब्दसहस्रद्वितये गते ।
मूर्त्तिः पाटलवर्णास्य द्विभुजा चिकुरोज्झिता ॥

Quoted by Sir William Jones in his paper in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol II, p 22

[2] Perhaps the real Nirvāna year was 544 B C

[3] "कलौ युधिष्ठिरपरीक्षिज्जनमेजयशतानीकविक्रमादित्यप्रभृतयः विंशत्यधिकशतसंख्यकाः चन्द्रवंशोद्भवा राजानः साष्टादशदिनत्रिमासाधिकपञ्चनवतिवर्षाधिकषट्शताधिकत्रिसहस्रवर्षाणि व्याप्य राज्यं कृत्वा स्वर्गताः । ततः शाहसोल्तान" etc

from the lunar race, reigned independently in East Bengal for some years even after the conquest of West Bengal by Muhammad Ibn Bakhtiyar If we count 3,695 years from 2449 B C we arrive at the year 1247 A D for the extinction of the Sena dynasty, and is very nearly true historically Hence the *Mahābhārata Kali*-reckoning was started from the zero year of the Yudhisthira Era, the very year of the Bhārata battle.

We trust, further evidences as to this *Mahābhārata Kali*-reckoning have all been supplanted by the astronomical *Kali* years started by Āryabhata I, in 499 A D So great was the fame of Āryabhata I, as regards astronomy and reckoning time, that very few dared to contradict him Ravikīrti, the famous writer of the Aihole inscription of Pulakeśin II (634 A D), accepts Āryabhata's finding of the year of the Bhārata battle in speaking of his time as 3,735 years elapsed from that event [1]

To sum up The *Mahābhārata* indeed says that the Bhārata battle was fought at the junction of the *Kali* and *Dvāpara* ages, but the *Mahābhārata Kali* age was different from the astronomical *Kali* age started by a back calculation by Āryabhata I, in 499 A D The former *Kaliyuga* truly began from 2454 B C (10th January) Even the year of the Bhārata battle (2449 B C) was in itself a possible beginning of this *Kaliyuga*, starting from the 14th January, 2449 B C We have shown examples of the *Mahābhārata Kali*-reckoning that have continued up to the present time from some other sources The astronomical *Kali*-reckoning is a mere astronomical fiction created by Āryabhata I, for a definite astronomical purpose, is an unreal thing as it was unconnected with any real astronomical event, is the result of a back calculation based on incorrect astronomical constants It never could have existed before 499 A D and thus cannot truly point out the time of any historical event prior to this date. Thus the Āryabhata tradition that the Bhārata battle was fought in 3102 B C is totally indefensible—is a pure myth [2]

[1] त्रिंशत्सु त्रिसहस्रेषु भारतादाहवादितः ।
सप्ताब्दशतयुक्तेषु गतेष्वब्देषु पञ्चसु ॥
—*Epigraphia Indica*, VI, pp 11 12

[2] *Cf* Dr Fleet's discussion about this Kali era in JRAS, 1911—pp 479 *et seq*, and pp. 675 *et esq.*

CHAPTER III

DATE OF THE BHĀRATA BATTLE

Bhārata-Battle Tradition (C)

2. *Purānic Traditions and Evidences*

Before we can consider the *Purānic* traditions and evidences as to the time of Bhārata battle, it is necessary for us to establish which of the *Purānas*, as we have them now, have the oldest strata in them and which the latest In fact we have to settle which are to be believed and which not, or which were the originals and which the borrowers and interpreters We have to think of —

(a) *The Sequence of the Purānas*

The *Purānas* which apparently seem to throw any light as to the date of Bhārata battle are —

(1) The *Matsya Purāna*,
(2) The *Vāyu Purāna*,
(3) The *Visnu Purāna*, and
(4) The *Bhāgavata Purāna*.

In all these *Purānas* we have the records of some of the earlier positions of the equinoxes and solstices, which are mere traditions and were not true for the time of composition of these works The latest positions of the solstices as given in these works may be some guide as to the real sequence of these *Purānas*. The *Matsya Purāna* says that the sun reached the southernmost limit in *Māgha* and nothernmost limit in *Srāvana* [1] This is of the same type as of the *Jyautisa Vedānga* rule '*Māgha-śrāvanayo-*

[1] *Matsya Purana*, 124, 44 and 50

ssadā'[1] and this was true for about 1400 B.C The same statement occurs also in the *Vāyu Purāna*,[2] together with the more definite statement as to the position of the solstices, *viz*, that of the *naksatras* the first was *Śravisthā*[3] A little later the *Vāyu Purāna* again says that the circle of constellations began from the *naksatra Śravanā*[4] Hence the latest indication of the position of the winter solstice was true for about 400 B C, and it is the same as in the present recension of the *Mahābhārata*[5] Thus from the astronomical indications it appears that the *Matsya Purāna* has the oldest *Purānic* stratum, then comes the *Vāyu* in the same respect

Another evidence which helps our finding is that both the *Matsya* and *Vāyu Purānas* are mentioned and quoted in the present recension of the *Mahābhārata*[6] According to Pargiter,[7] of the *Vāyu* and *Matsya Purānas*, the *Matsya* gives the oldest version, *Vāyu* the next in so far as the dynastic lists of the *Kali* age are concerned Hence our finding of the sequence of the *Purānas* has some support from Pargiter and so also from Dr V A. Smith It must be clearly understood that we do not mean to say that the *Purānas* as a class of literature did not exist before the present *Matsya* and *Vāyu Purānas* began to be compiled In the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* or the *Brhadāranyaka Upanisat*,[8] we find the enumeration of different classes of literature in which the *Purānas* have a place In the *Āśvalāyana Grhya-Sūtra*, the *Purānas* and *Gāthā-Nārāśamsīs*[9] are distinctly mentioned We do not, however, know the names of the *Purānas* which were current in the age of the *Brāhmanas* or of the *Sūtras*

1 *Yājusa Jyautisa*, 7

प्रपद्येते श्रविष्ठादौ सूर्याचन्द्रमसावुदक्।

सार्पार्धे दक्षिणार्कस्तु माघश्रावणयोः सदा॥

2 *Vāyu Purāna*, 50, 172 and 1?7

3 *Ibid*, 53, 111-116

4 *Ibid*, 53, 119

5 *M Bh*, *Asvamedha*, 44, 2, for discussion, *cf* Chapter I, p 1

6 *M Bh*, *Vana*, 187, 55, also *M Bh*, *Vana*, 191, 16

इत्येतन्मात्स्यकं नाम पुराणं परिकीर्त्तितम्। वायुप्रोक्तमनुस्मृत्य पुराणमृषिसंस्तुतम्।

7 Pargiter's *Kali Age*, Introduction, p XX

8 *Brhadāranyaka Upanisat*, IV, 5, 11

9 *Āśvalāyana Grhya Sūtra*, 3, 3, 1.

Now coming to the *Visnu Purāna,* we find that it is the telling of Parāśara, the father of Vyāsa to one Maitreya during the reign of Parīksit,[1] the grandson of Arjuna Thus Vyāsa being the grandfather of the Pāndavas, Parāśara was the great-great grandfather of Parīksit In the *Mahābhārata* itself Parāśara is nowhere described as taking part in the events of the Pāndava time Hence the story of the origin of the *Visnu Purāna* conflicts with our sense of historical perspective.

Again coming to the latest position of the solstices as stated in the *Visnu Purāna* we find that it says [2] that the sun turned north at the first point of *Makara* (*Capricorn*) and turned south at the first point of *Karkata* (*Cancer*) *Such a statement at a vital point at once should place the present recension of the Visnu Purāna between 499 A D to 700 A D* Similar remarks apply to the *Bhāgavata Purāna* also

We thus come to the conclusion that the oldest *Purānas* are the *Matsya* and *Vāyu*, and the *Visnu* and the *Bhāgavata* the latest from a consideration of the astronomical indications in them So when we attempt at finding the year of the Bhārata battle from the *Purānas*, we should place the greatest reliance on the *Matsya* and then on the *Vāyu* accounts The *Visnu* and *Bhāgavata* evidences should be considered as mere conjectures and misinterpretations of the *Matsya* texts and as such are least reliable We now proceed on to consider the *Purānic* dynastic lists as given in the *Matsya Purāna*

(b) *Purānic Dynastic Lists*

The *Purānic* dynastic lists apparently seem to maintain a continuous record from the year of the Bhārata battle down to the extinction of the Andhras The accounts of these lists contain two sorts of statements, *viz* , (1) in which the reign periods of the kings are severally stated, behind which there is apparently the character of real chronicling, and (2) the statements of the reign periods of the different dynasties made collectively, which are

[1] *Visnu Purana*, IV, 20 13 I, 1, 16

[2] *Ibid* II, 8, 28 30

evidently the work of later summarizers. We shall consider chiefly the Magadhan dynasties, the first of which was the Bṛhadratha dynasty. The *Matsya* account reads as follows:[1] —

"Henceforward I will declare the Bṛhadrathas of Magadha who are Kings in Sahadeva's lineage in Jarāsandha's race, *those past, those existing* and *those again who will exist*, I will declare *the prominent amongst them*, listen as I speak of them."

The dynastic list is thus professedly incomplete as it contains only the names of chief kings and the durations of their rules. The narration next runs thus:[2] —

"When the Bhārata battle took place and Sahadeva was slain, his heir Somādhi became king in Girivraja, he reigned 58 years -

[1] अत ऊर्ध्वं प्रवक्ष्यामि मागधा ये बृहद्रथाः ।
जरासन्धस्य ये वंशे सहदेवान्वये नृपाः ॥
अतीता वर्तमानाश्च भविष्याश्च तथा पुनः ।
प्राधान्यतः प्रवक्ष्यामि गदतो मे निबोधत ॥

[2] संग्रामे भारते वृत्ते सहदेवे निपातिते ।
सोमाधिस्तस्य दायादो राजाऽभूत् स गिरिव्रजे ॥
पञ्चाशत तथाऽष्टौ च समा राज्यमकारयत ।
श्रुतश्रवाश्चतु षष्टि समास्तस्यान्वयेऽभवत ॥
अयुतायुस्तु षड्विंशद् राज्य वर्षाण्यकारयत् ।
चत्वारिंशत् समास्तस्य निरमित्रो दिव गतः ॥
पञ्चाशत समा षट् च सुचव प्राप्तवान् महीम् ।
त्रयोविंशद् बृहत्कर्मा राज्य वर्षाण्यकारयत् ॥
सेनाजित् सम्प्रयातश्च भुक्त्वा पञ्चाशत महीम् ।
श्रुतञ्जयस्तु वर्षाणि चत्वारिंशद् भविष्यति ॥
महाबलो महाबाहुर्महाबुद्धिपराक्रमः ।
अष्टाविंशति वर्षाणि मही प्राप्स्यति वै विभुः ॥
अष्टपञ्चाशत चाब्दान् राज्ये स्थास्यति व शुचिः ।
अष्टाविंशत् समा राजा क्षेमो भोक्ष्यति वै महीम् ॥
सुव्रतस्तु चतु षष्टि राज्य प्राप्स्यति वीर्यवान् ।
पञ्चविंशति वर्षाणि सुनेत्रो भोक्ष्यते महीम् ॥
भोक्ष्यते निर्वृतिश्चेमासष्टपञ्चाशत समा ।
अष्टाविंशत् समा राज्यम् त्रिनेत्रो भोक्ष्यते ततः ॥

In his lineage Śrutaśravas was for 64 years Ayutāyus reigned 26 years His successor Niramitra enjoyed the earth 40 years and went to heaven Sukṣatra obtained 56 years Bṛhatkarman reigned 23 years Senājit is also gone after enjoying the earth 50 years Śrutañjaya will be for 40 years, great in strength, large of arm, great in mind and prowess Vibhu will obtain 28 years, Śuci will stand in the kingdom 58 years King Kṣema will enjoy the earth 28 years. Valiant Suvrata will obtain the kingdom 64 years. Sunetra will enjoy the earth 35 years And Nirvṛti will enjoy this earth 58 years Trinetra will next enjoy the kingdom 28 years Dṛḍhasena will be 48 years Mahīnetra will be resplendent 33 years Sucala will be king 32 years King Sunetra will enjoy the kingdom 40 years King Satyajit will enjoy the earth 83 years And Viśvajit will obtain this earth and be 25 years Ripuñjaya will obtain the earth 50 years ''

Then the *Purānic* summarizer says[1] —

''These sixteen kings are to be known as future Bṛhadrathas Their life-time will exceed by twenty years (the normal span of life) and their kingdom will last 700 years ''

As we shall see, that these 16 Kings are all named in the above lists form Senājit to Ripuñjaya, and the sum total of their rules comes up correctly to 700 years The account is concluded by[2]

चत्वारिंशत् तथाऽष्टौ च दृढसेनो भविष्यति ।
त्रयस्त्रिंशत्तु वर्षाणि महीनेत्रो प्रकाश्यते ॥
द्वात्रिंशत्तु समा राजा सुचलस्तु भविष्यति ।
चत्वारिंशत् समा राजा सुनेत्रो भोक्ष्यते ततः ॥
सत्यजित् पृथिवीं राजा त्र्यशीतिं भोक्ष्यते समाः ।
प्राप्येमां विश्वजिच्चापि पञ्चविंशद् भविष्यति ॥
रिपुञ्जयस्तु वर्षाणि पञ्चाशत् प्राप्स्यते महीम् ।

1 षोडशैते नृपा ज्ञेया भवितारो बृहद्रथाः ।
वर्षोविंशाधिकं तेषां राज्यं च शतसप्तकम् ॥

2 द्वात्रिंशति नृपा ह्येते भवितारो बृहद्रथाः ।
पूर्णं वर्षसहस्रं वै तेषां राज्यं भविष्यति ॥

The *Matsya* texts quoted above have been very carefully compiled from Pargiter's *Dynasties of the Kali Age* In the translation also I have followed Pargiter

"*These future Brhadrathas will certainly be 32 kings in all, and then kingdom will last full thousand years indeed.*"

The list of these Brhadratha kings as named above may be made up as follows. It should be clearly borne in mind that there are gaps to be filled up in this list—the gaps which we do not know how to fill up.

'Past' Kings	Years of Rule	'Present' and 'Future' Kings	Years of Rule
Somādhi	58	Senājit	50
Śrutaśravas	64	Śrutañjaya	40
Ayutāyus	26	Vibhu	28
Niramitra	40	Suci	58
Suksatra	56	Ksema	28
Brhatkarman	23	Suvrata	64
Total Years of 'Past' Kings	267	Sunetra I	35
		Nirvrti	58
		Trinetra	28
		Drdhasena	48
		Mahīnetra	33
		Sucala	32
		Sunetra II	40
		Satyajit	83
		Viśvajit	25
		Ripuñjaya	50
		Total Years of 'Present' and 'Future' Kings	700

In the above list there are named 22 kings in all, but nowhere do we find a clear statement that any one king was the son of the king named before him or he was the father of the next king. On the other hand we have the introductory statement that these

were the chief kings of the line running from Somādhi, or that the list of kings is incomplete from the start to finish The sixteen of the 'future' Bṛhadrathas named in the list were only those of extraordinary longevity The total number of the 'future' Bṛhadrathas is again stated definitely to be 32 and that the total duration of their rule would be full 1,000 years It is not possible to arrive at any definite conclusion as to the duration of the kingship of the Bṛhadrathas from such an incomplete list In order to understand the statements of the *Purānic* summarizers we however take the incomplete list as complete and see what results we are led to We have the series of dynasties as follows —

		Total Years
(1)	Bṛhadrathas of Magadha from the year of Bhārata battle	967
(2)	Pradyotas of Avanti[1]	173
(3)	Śisunāgas of Magadha[2]	360
	Total[3] Years	1,500

Then came the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda who was the founder of the Nanda dynasty of Magadha which lasted, according to the *Purānas*, full 100 years

Thus between the year of the Bhārata battle or of the birth of *Parīkṣit* to the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda, as worked out from the dynastic lists of the Purānas there was the interval of

[1] बृहद्रथेष्वतीतेषु वीतिहोत्रेष्ववन्तिषु ।

पुलिक (पुनिक') स्वामिनं हत्वा स्वपुत्रमभिषेक्ष्यति ॥

Here compare the *Viṣṇu* statement which makes Pulika the minister of the last Bṛhadratha Ripuñjaya

[2] Here the collective statement runs thus

शतानि त्रीणि वर्षाणि षष्टिवर्षाधिकानि च ।

शिशुनागा भविष्यन्ति राजानो क्षत्रबान्धवा ॥

'The Śiśunāgas who were Kṣatriyas of an inferior class will reign for 360 years'

[3] According to *Viṣṇu* and *Bhāgavata Purānas* the period of Bṛhadrathas is 1,000 years and that of the Pradyotas is 138 years and of the Śiśunagas 360 years Thus the total comes up to 1,498 years

1500 years nearly This is in agreement with the following statement of the *Purānic* summarizer —

यावत् परीक्षितो जन्म यावन्नन्दाभिषेचनम् ।
एवं वर्षसहस्रं तु ज्ञेयं पञ्चशतोत्तरम् ॥[1]

'From the birth of Parīksit to the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda, the interval is to be known as one thousand five hundred years'

We should here be very careful to ascertain what the second half of the second line of the above verse was, according to the *Purānic* summarizer The variant readings are "ज्ञेय पञ्चदशोत्तरम्", 'शतं पञ्चदशोत्तरम्", "ज्ञेयं पञ्चाशदुत्तरम्" and "ज्ञेय पञ्चशतोत्तरम्" The very next stanza runs thus —

पुलोमास्तु तथान्ध्रास्तु महापद्मान्तरे पुनः ।
अन्तरं च शतान्यष्टौ पट्त्रिंशत्तु समास्तथा ।
तावत् कालान्तरं भाव्यम् अन्ध्रान्ताद्याः प्रकीर्त्तिताः ॥

The substance of which is that between Mahāpadma and the extinction of the Andhras the time interval was 836 years According to the dynastic lists the sum total of the durations works out as.—

Nandas	100 years
Mauryas	137 ,,
Sungas	112 ,,
Kanvas	45 ,,
Andhras	460 ,,
Total[2]	854 years

Here a difference of 18 years is inexplicable as we do not know how long Mahāpadma Nanda ruled

Now the interval between the birth of Parīksit and Nanda's accession=1500 years as shown before, and the interval between Nanda's accession and the end of Andhras=854 years as shown

[1] Pargiter has traced this reading in *cefMt*, *bMt*, *lnMt*, *blVs* recensions according to his notation in his *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p 58

[2] According to *Visnu* and *Bhāgavata Purānas* the total comes out to be 850 years

above Hence the time between the birth of Parīksit and the extinction of the Andhras becomes according to the *Purānic* =2354 years

Now in the mode of reckoning time by the cycle of *Rsis*, the constellation of the great-bear is taken to remain conjoined with one *naksatra* for hundred years In 2354 years, the *Rsis* (Great Bear) would be taken to pass over 23 *naksatras* and reach the 24th *naksatra* This is thus stated in the verse [1] :—

सप्तर्षयो मघायुक्ताः काले पारीक्षिते शतम् ।
अन्ध्रान्ते तु चतुर्विंशे भविष्यन्ति मते मम ॥

'The seven *Rsis* were conjoined with *Maghās* 100 years in Parīksit's time, they will be in the 24th constellation (*naksatra*) according to my estimate at the end of the Andhras'

Here we have a clear statement by the summarizer that between the birth of Parīksit and the extinction of the Andhras the interval was slightly less than 2400 years Hence it is clear that the true intention of the *Purānic* summarizer, as to the interval between the birth of Parīksit and the accession of Mahāpadma, is that it was about 1500 years and the true reading of the second half of the second line of the verse in question is undoubtedly "ज्ञेयं पञ्चशतोत्तरम् "

We have now to consider the following *Visnu* and *Bhāgavata* statements that—

(*a*) 'From the birth of Parīksit to the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda the time interval is to be known as 1015 (or 1050) years [2]

(*b*) 'When the Great Bear will reach the *naksatra Pūrvāsādhā*, the *Kali* Age will have ascendency from the time of Nanda' [3]

These verses cannot be traced either to the *Matsya* or the *Vāyu* texts They are at variance with the dynastic lists as given in the *Visnu* and the *Bhāgavata Purānas* Even Śrīdhara, the

1 Pargiter's *Kali Age* pp 58 59

2 महापद्माभिषेकात्तु यावज्जन्म परीक्षित । एकं वर्षसहस्रं तु ज्ञेयं पञ्चदशोत्तरम् ॥
Pargiter's *Kali Age*, p 55

3 प्रयास्यन्ति यदा चैते पूर्वाषाढां महर्षयः । तदा नन्दात् प्रभृत्येष कलिर्वृद्धिं गमिष्यति ॥
Ibid, p 61

great commentator of the *Visnu Purāna*, could not reconcile these statements and in the second statement would substitute 'Pradyota', the first king of the Pradyota dynasty in place of 'Nanda'[1] In these *Purānas* (*Visnu* and *Bhāgavata*) the summarizers were crazy in their arithmetic, and the *Purānas* themselves were written most probably in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, and are not at all trustworthy in so far as historical matter is concerned The main aim of the composers or compilers of these *Purānas* was to inculcate Vaisnavism or the Visnu-cult and perhaps not to record any real history

If we are to put any faith in the *Purānic* dynasty-lists and the *Purānic* summarizers, the date of the Bhārata battle becomes 1921 B C as follows.—

Interval between Parīksit and Nanda	=	1500 years
Duration of the Nanda dynasty	=	100 ,,
Accession of Chandra Gupta Maurya	=	321 B C
The total gives the year	=	1921 B C

but we cannot accept as correct these *Purānic* statements whether of the dynastic lists or of the *Purānic* summarizers The Brhadratha dynastic list is incomplete, further there was probably one period of *interregnum* between the extinction of the Brhadrathas of Magadha and the rise of Pradyotas of Avantī

Again if we take that the 'future' Brhadrathas reigned for full 1000 years and the past Brhadrathas for 300 years, the dynastic lists would make the interval between the birth of Parīksit and the accession of Nanda 1900 years taking the *interregnum* to have lasted 100 years To this period we have to add 421 to have the year of the Bhārata battle, which would now stand at 2321 B C All such speculations are valueless or inconclusive when they are based on totally unreliable materials derived from the *Purānas* By way of contrast we have shown already,

[1] *Cf* "यावदिति। पञ्चशतोत्तरं वर्षसहस्रम्। पाठान्तरे परीक्षितसमकालं मागधसोमापिमारभ्य रिपुञ्जयान्तं मागधानां सहस्राब्दत्वस्योक्तत्वात्। अनन्तरं प्रद्योतशिशुनागानां पञ्चशताब्दस्योक्तत्वात् सार्द्धसहस्रस्योक्तस्य व्याख्यातम्। वायुक्तेऽपि परीक्षिन्नन्दान्तरं सार्द्धसहस्रमित्युक्तम्। यदा पूर्वाषाढायां महर्षयः गमिष्यन्ति तदा प्रद्योतात् प्रभृति वृद्धिं गच्छतीत्यर्थः।" Śrīdhara's commentary on the *Visnu Purāna*

how neatly and directly the *Mahābhārata* astronomical references lead us to the real year of the Bhārata battle

If the *Purānic* faulty dynastic lists may lead us to 2257 B C, we should more readily and preferably accept 2449 B C as the true year of the Bhārata battle, since it is deduced from the *Mahābhārata incidental* statements, which are more definite and also consistent astronomically, and corroborated by the Vrddha Garga tradition as recorded by Varāhamihira

(e) *Further Purānic Evidences by the 'Position' of the Great Bear*

We now proceed to consider another alleged *Purānic* evidence which states the position of the Great Bear in Parīksit's time. To us the statement that the Great Bear remains in one *naksatra* for 100 years is meaningless, still we have to make some attempt at understanding what the *Purānas* say about it The *Purānic* description of the movement of the Great Bear runs thus [1] —

'The two front stars of the Great Bear, which are seen when risen at night, the lunar constellation which is seen equally between them in the sky, the Great Bear is to be known as conjoined with that constellation 100 years in the sky This is the exposition of the conjunction of the lunar constellations and the Great Bear The Great Bear was conjoined with the *Maghās* in Parīksit's time 100 years ' [2]

The two front stars are the two pointers, *viz* α and β *Ursae Majoris* We are to draw two great circles, one through each of the pointers and both passing through the celestial pole of the time these circles will cut the ecliptic in two points, between these two points the *naksatra* in conjunction with the Great Bear will be equally distinct The Great Bear was conjoined with

1 सप्तर्षीणाञ्च यौ पूर्वौ दृश्येते ह्युदितौ निशि
तयोर्मध्ये तु नक्षत्रं दृश्यते यत् समं दिवि ॥
तेन सप्तर्षयो युक्तास्तिष्ठन्त्यब्दशतं नृणाम् ।
नक्षत्राणामृषीणाञ्च योगस्यैतन्निदर्शनम् ॥
सप्तर्षयो मघायुक्ताः काले पारीक्षिते शतम् ।
Pargiter's *Kali Age*, p 59

2 Pargiter's *Kali Age*, Translation on p 75

the *Maghās* (α, η, γ, ζ, μ and ε *Leonis*) in Parīkṣit's time according to the above *Purāṇic* statement This means that the celestial pole of the time of Parīkṣit lay on the great circle passing through the central star of the *Maghās* (α *Leonis*) and the middle point of the arc joining α and β *Ursae Majoris* The celestial pole moves in a small circle about the pole of the ecliptic of a mean radius of about 23° 30′ We have solved this problem and the time of this celestial event comes out to be 371 B C The above statement as to the alleged position of the Great Bear in Parīkṣit's time is also equivalent to this that the right ascension of α *Leonis* was equal to the mean of the right ascensions of α and β *Ursae Majoris* From Dr Neugebauer's *Sterntafeln* (Leipzig, 1912) the time for the event becomes about 300 B C It should thus appear that the time indicated by this *Purāṇic* statement, as to the position of the Great Bear in Parīkṣit's time, belonged neither to Parīkṣit nor to this *Purāṇic* astronomer It is absolutely valueless for our purpose Any other interpretations, that may be sought to be given to this position of the Great Bear as stated in the *Purāṇas* in Parīkṣit's time, are not acceptable as they would be mere speculations.

Some say that *Saptarṣi* or Great Bear here means the solsticial colure, the compiler of the *Purāṇa* wants to say that the solsticial colure passed through the middle point of the line joining α and β *Ursai Majoris* at the time of Parīkṣit According to the above interpretation the time of Parīkṣit stands at the neighbourhood of 1400 B C But according to the statements of the *Purāṇas*, the *Saptarṣi*-line passed not only through the middle point of α and β *Ursai Majoris*, but it also passed through the middle point of the *nakṣatra Maghā* at the time of Parīkṣit. So according to the *Purāṇas*, the finding of time is not to be done with the help of α and β *Ursai Majoris* alone, leaving aside the *nakṣatra* division *Maghā* or the star *Regulus* On the other hand we can find out the time alone with the help of *Maghā* It may be shown that the summer solstical colure passed through *Maghā* (*Regulus*) in 2350 B C, but as the middle point of the *nakṣatra Maghā* is at about 40′ east[1] of the star *Regulus*, the time when

[1] According to the division of the ecliptic into *nakṣatras* as is now accepted.

the solsticial colure bisected that *naksatra* division is 2398 B C which is very near to 2449 B C the year of the Bhārata battle as determined by us We have already said that an exact determination of the time of any past event by the above method is not possible It would be rather controversial and inconclusive if in interpreting any statement of the *Purānas* we take into account only a portion of it We have shown before that the *Purānic* statement regarding the position of the Great Bear is valueless The year 371 B C, obtained from the position of the Great Bear, perhaps relates to the time when the *Matsya* and the *Vāyu Purānas* began to be compiled, which has no connection with the time of Parīksit

We have thus most carefully examined the *Purānic* evidences as to the date of the Bhārata battle We have established that the oldest *Purānic* strata are to be found in the *Matsya Purāna*, then comes the *Vāyu Purāna* in sequence of time In so far as historical matter is concerned the *Visnu* and *Bhāgavata Purānas* are not at all trustworthy Even in the *Matsya Purāna*, the dynastic list of the Brhadrathas of Magadha is incomplete in that it states the names of the chief kings only and the durations of their rules We have also seen that the *Purānic* summarizers really mean that the time interval between the birth of Parīksit and the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda was about 1500 years The *Visnu* and *Bhāgāvata* summarizers' statement that the same period was about a thousand years is not reliable as it contradicts the dynastic lists of these *Purānas*, cannot be traced to the *Matsya* and *Vāyu Purānas* and not acceptable even to the great scholiast Śrīdhara of the *Visnu Purāna* The incomplete dynastic lists of the *Matsya Purāna* properly interpreted may lead us to 2321 B C as the year of Bhārata battle Any speculation with such faulty materials as the *Purānas* afford, can never lead to the real truth about the year of the Bhārata battle On the other hand much better *data* have been derived by us from the Mahābhārata itself which directly lead us to 2449 B C as the Year of the Bhārata battle and this was the zero year of the Judhisthira era according to the Vrddha Garga tradition We have also given the most careful consideration

to the *Purāṇic* description of the position of the Great Bear in Parīkṣit's time This only leads us to the year 371 B C—a most hopelessly absurd result Hence the *Purāṇic* evidences taken as a whole are incomplete and cannot lead us to the real year of the Bhārata battle. We trust our interpretations of all these evidences would be found to be rational and compare favourably with those given by Pargiter,[1] Dev,[2] Ray,[3] Bose,[4] and others.

Thus in the previous chapter we have shown that the Ārya-bhata tradition, *viz*, 3102 B C as the year of the Bhārata battle is wrong In the present chapter we have also established that the *Purāṇic* evidences are all incomplete and inadequate for our purpose The Mahābhārata references lead us directly to the year 2449 B C as the year of the great battle The *Kaliyuga* which the *Mahābhārata* speaks of beginning from about the year of the Bhārata battle truly started from the 10th January, 2454 B C Even in the year of the battle (2449 B C) this *Mahābhārata Kaliyuga* may have begun from the 15th January We may look for epigraphic evidences in this connection but none have been brought to light as yet Let us hope that such may be discovered at no distant future, when only our finding may be finally tested Till then our finding of the year of the Bhārata battle must be allowed to stand

1 Pargiter's *Indian Historical Traditions—The date of the Bhārata battle*
2 Dev in JRASBL, 1925
3 Prof J C Ray in भारतवर्ष for the Bengali year 1310, Nos. 3, 4 and 5
4 Dr G S Bose in his पुराणप्रवेश in Bengali.

CHAPTER IV

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Madhu-Vidyā or the Science of Spring

In our enquiry into the antiquity of the *Vedas*, we shall, as a first step, try to interpret the *Madhu-Vidyā* or the Science of Spring of the Vedic Hindus It may be objected at the outset that the term *Madhu-Vidyā* may not really mean the Science of Spring as here translated Our answer is that Madhu and Mādhava were the two months of spring of the Vedic tropical year [1] Hence there is some justification for putting *Madhu-Vidyā* as equivalent to Science of Spring I trust more reasons for this rendering into English of the word would be apparent with the development of this chapter

To every Hindu the following *Rcas* are well-known —

Rg-veda, M I, 90, 6-8

मधुवाताऽऋतायते मधु क्षरन्ति सिन्धवः । माध्वीर्नः सन्त्वोषधीः ॥
मधुनक्तमुतोषसो मधुमत् पार्थिवं रजः । मधुद्यौरस्तु नः पिता ॥
मधुमान्नो वनस्पतिर्मधुमाँ अस्तु सूर्यः । माध्वीर्गावो भवन्तु नः ॥

'Sweetness is blown by the winds and sweetness is discharged by the rivers, may the herbs be full of sweetness to us May the nights and twilights be sweet to us, may the dust of the earth be sweet, may the sky-father (Dyauspitr = Jupiter) to us be full of sweetness May the trees be full of sweetness to us, may the sun be full of sweetness, may our kine be sweet to us '

The *rsi* here finds that with the advent of spring air becomes pleasant and the water of rivers delightful This was the time for harvesting wheat and barley and he conjures up the herbs to

[1] 'मधुश्च माधवश्च वासन्तिकावृतू' ।

Taittirīya Samhita, 1, 4, 11

yield him sweetness in the shape of a bumper crop He expects the nights and twilights to lose the chillness of winter and be pleasant to him, and even the dust of the earth is to lose the cold touch of winter He expects, the benign sky would yield him timely rain The trees (then bearing flowers), the sun, the cattle are all to become full of sweetness

The elements which bring him happiness or sweetness are — (1) the winds, (2) the rivers, (3) the herbs, (4) the nights, (5) the twilights, (6) the earth, (7) the kindly sky bringing in timely rain, (8) the trees, (9) the sun, and (10) the cattle

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣat*, II, 5, 1—14, the elements bringing in sweetness or *Madhu* to all beings are elaborated and enumerated as (1) the earth, (2) water, (3) fire, (4) the winds, (5) the sun, (6) the cardinal points of the horizon, (7) the moon, (8) lightning, (9) thunder, (10) the sky, (11) right action, (12) truth, (13) humanity, and (14) the self Here the connection of the elements with the coming of spring is quite forgotten, but it is remembered that the *Madhu-vidyā* or the science of spring was discovered by Tvaṣṭṛ from whom it passed to Dadhīci who revealed this science to the Aśvins after they had replaced the head of Dadhīci with the head of a horse This story was revealed to the *ṛṣi* Kakṣīvān according to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣat*

The first verse quoted in this *Upaniṣat* is the *ṛc* M I, 116, 12 and runs as follows —

तद्वां नरासनेयदंस उग्रम् आविष्कृणोमि तन्यतुर्न वृष्टिम् ।
दध्यङ् ह यन्मध्वाथर्वणो वाम् अश्वस्य शीर्ष्णा प्रयदीमुवाच ॥

'As thunder announces rain, I proclaim, leaders, for the sake of acquiring wealth, that great deed which you performed, when provided by you with the head of a horse, Dadhyañc, the son of Atharvan taught you the science of *Madhu* (*i e* , spring) '

The next verse quoted by the *Upaniṣat* is *Ṛg-veda*, M I, 117, 22, which is —

आथर्वणायाश्विना दधीचेऽश्व्यं शिरः प्रत्यैरयतम् ।
स वां मधु प्रवोचदृतायं त्वाष्ट्रं यद्दस्रावपि कक्ष्यं वाम् ॥

'You replaced, Aśvins, with the head of a horse, (the head of) Dadhīci, the son of Atharvan, and true to his promise he revealed to you the science of *Madhu* (spring) which he had learnt from Tvaṣṭi and which was a jealously guarded secret'

These lines from the *Ṛg-veda* suggest to us that the science of spring or *Madhu-vidyā* was nothing but the knowledge of the celestial signal for the coming of spring What that signal was is now the matter for our consideration

The Aśvins are always spoken of and addressed in the dual number The Vedic *ṛṣis* most probably identified the Aśvins with the stars α and β *Arietis*—the prominent stars of the *nakṣatra Aśvinī* Whether this be true or not, this much is certain that the Aśvins were and are even now regarded as the presiding deities of this *nakṣatra Aśvinī* The three stars α, β and γ *Arietis* form a *constellation which is likened to the head of a horse* [1] The Aśvins are spoken of as riding in the heavens in their triangular, three-wheeled and spring-bearing Chariot, in several places in the *Ṛg-Veda* some of which are —

(1) त्रयः पवयो मधुवाहने रथे सोमस्य वेनामनुविश्व इद् विदुः ।

M I, 34. 2

'Three are the solid wheels of your *spring-bearing* (*Madhu-Vāhana*) chariot, as all the gods knew it to be when you attended on Venā (=Venus ?) the beloved of Moon'

(2) अर्वाङ् त्रिचक्रो मधुवाहनो रथो जीराश्वो अश्विनोर्यातु सुष्टुतः ।
त्रिवन्धुरो मघवा विश्वसौभगः शं न आवक्षद् द्विपदे चतुष्पदे[2] ॥

M I, 157 3

'May the three-wheeled car of the Aśvins, which is the harbinger of spring (*Madhu-Vāhana*), drawn by swift horses, three canopied, filled with treasure, and every way auspicious, come to our presence and bring prosperity to our people and our cattle'

[1] अश्वयोनिशिरस्त्र्यं ।

Śākalya Saṃhitā, II, 162

[2] I am indebted to Prof M M Vidhusekhara Sastri, the Head of the Dept of Sanskrit, Calcutta University, for this and the next reference from the *Ṛg Veda* I owe it to him also that the adjective 'मधुवाहन' 'Spring-bearing' is applied only to the car of the Aśvins and to the car of no other god in the *Ṛg Veda*

(3) प्रातर्युजं नासत्याधितिष्ठथः प्रातर्यावान मधुवाहनं रथम् ।

M X, 41 2

'Ascend, Nāsatyas, your *spring-bearing chariot* which is *harnessed at dawn* and *set in motion at dawn*, etc'

(4) क्व त्रीचक्रा त्रिवृतो रथस्य, क्व त्रयो वन्धुरो ये सनीलाः ।

M. I, 34 9

'Where, Nāsatyas, are the three wheels of your triangular car Where the three fastening and props (of the awning)?'

(Wilson)

(5) त्रिवन्धुरेण त्रिवृता सुपेशसा रथेनायातमश्विना ।

M I, 47 2

'Come Aśvins, with your three-columned triangular car'

(Wilson)

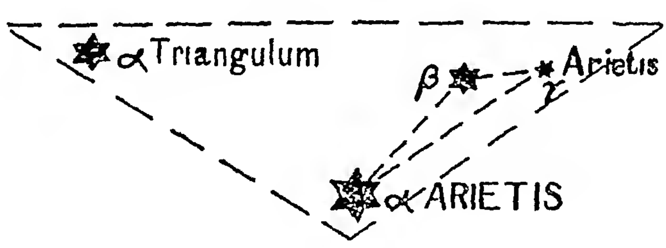
(6) त्रिवन्धुरेण त्रिवृता रथेन त्रिचक्रेण सुवृतायातमर्वाक् ।

M I, 118 2

'Come to us with your tri-columnar, triangular, three-wheeled and well-constructed car' (Wilson)

All these references speak of the triangular, tri-columnar, three-wheeled car of the Aśvins Here the three wheels of the car of the Aśvins were perhaps the three stars α, β, and γ *Arietis*, which constitute the *nakṣatra Aśvinī* likened to the head of a horse. Most probably the car of the Aśvins included one more star, α *Triangulum*, which with α and β *Arietis* formed a stable solid triangle as shown in the figure given below

Aśvins' △ Car



The first three references speak of the car of the Aśvins as 'मधुवाहन' or *harbinger of spring* The third reference directly

states that the car of the Aśvins which is '*spring-bearing*' is *harnessed at dawn* and *set in motion at dawn* Inference is here irresistible that when the car of the Aśvins, *viz* the constellation Aśvinī consisting of the stars α, β and γ *Arietis* became first visible at dawn, the season of spring began at the place of observation which we shall take to be of the latitude of Kuruksetra in the Punjab

According to Wilson, the Aśvins were 'the precursors of the dawn, at which season they ought to be worshipped with libations of Soma juice' There are of course many passages in the *Rg-Veda* which justify the above statement made by Wilson, but we desist from quoting them here as they only tell us that first rose the Aśvins, then came the dawn, and then rose the sun [1] The season referred to here is that of the heliacal rising of the car of the Aśvins which brought in spring The jealously guarded 'Madhu-Vidyā' or the 'Science of Spring' was thus nothing but the knowledge of the celestial signal for the advent of spring, and this was the heliacal rising of the stars α, β, γ, *Arietis* Of these three, α *Arietis* rises last Hence the Aśvins rise completely when α *Arietis* rises

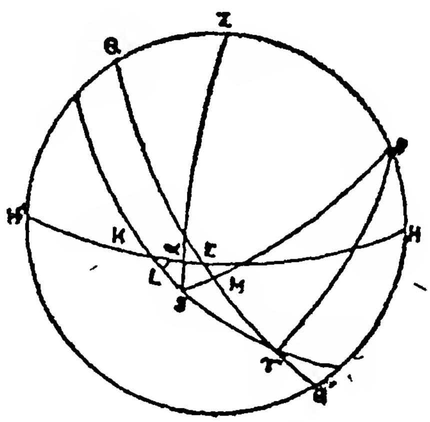
For the beginning of the Indian spring, the sun should have the tropical longitude of 330° Hence when the star α *Arietis* became first visible at dawn it was the beginning of Indian spring with a celestial longitude of 330° for the sun—at a place in the Punjab of which the latitude was the same as that of Kuruksetra (30° N) This furnishes sufficient data for the calculation of the time for this astronomical event Now the dawn begins when the sun is 18° below the horizon Thus at the time when α *Arietis* reached the eastern horizon with the sun at 18° below the horizon, *Madhu-Vidyā* was discovered or it was recognised

[1] Some of these references from the *Rg Veda* are noted below —

(*a*) युवोर्हि पूर्व्वं सवितोषसो रथम् ऋताय चि घृतवन्तमिष्यति । (M I, 7, 4, 10) which means 'Before the dawn even, Savitri sends to bring you to the rite, your wonderful car shining with clarified butter' (*b*) उषस्य स्तोमो अश्विनावजीग । (M III, 5, 5, 1) i e 'the praiser awakes to glorify the Aśvins before the dawn' These translations are due to Wilson *Cf* other references — M I, 5, 5, M I, 6, 7, M I, 9, 31, 4 M I, 9, 4, 9, M III, 5, 5, 1, M VII, 4 11, 5, M VIII, 1, 5, 2

as the signal for the beginning of spring at the latitude of Kuruksetra (30° N)

We now proceed to find the time when this astronomical phenomena took place



Let the above figure represent the observer's celestial sphere at the latitude of Kuruksetra Here PZQH′ is the observer's meridian, HEαKH′ the horizon, QEQ′ the celestial equator and γSLK the ecliptic S indicates the sun's position at 18° below the horizon According to our interpretation Sγ= 30°, when it was the beginning of Indian spring α is the point on the horizon where α-*Arietis* rose at the time Z and P respectively denote the zenith and the celestial pole of the observer Join Pγ and PS by arcs of great circles, PS cutting the celestial equator at M. Draw αL perpendicular to the ecliptic.

For 1931 A D , α *Arietis* had its—

(1) Mean celestial longitude=36° 41′ 50″ and

(2) ,, ,, latitude=9° 57′ 46″ N, which is taken to remain constant

The ∠EγK=obliquity of the ecliptic

=24° 6′ 35″ according to our assumption which was true for 4000 B C

(*a*) In the triangle γSM, we have γM=27°47′ 18″, and SM=11°47′

(*b*) In the triangle PZS, ZS=108°, SP=101°47′, and PZ=60°

The angle ZPS is given by,

$$\tan \frac{ZPS}{2} = \sqrt{\frac{\sin \frac{ZS+PS-PZ}{2} \times \sin \frac{ZS+PZ-PS}{2}}{\sin \frac{ZS+PS+PZ}{2} \times \sin \frac{PS+PZ-ZS}{2}}}$$

Hence we find that the angle $ZPS = 103°20'54''$

(c) Again in the triangle $E\gamma K$, $\angle KE\gamma = 120°$

$$E\gamma = \angle ZPS + \angle SP\gamma - 90°$$
$$= 103°20'54'' + 27°47'18'' - 90°$$
$$= 41°8'12'',$$

and $\angle E\gamma K = 24°6'35''$,

The arc γK is given by,

$$\cot \gamma K \sin E\gamma = \cos E\gamma \cos 24°6'35'' - \tan 30° \sin 24°6'35''$$

$$= \frac{\cos E\gamma \times \cos (24°6'35'' + \phi)}{\cos \phi}$$

where ϕ is given by $\tan \phi = \dfrac{\tan 30°}{\cos E\gamma}$,

whence $\phi = 37°28'25''$,

$\therefore \gamma K = 55°31'51''$

(d) From the same triangle we then find the angle K, which becomes $= 43°43'17''$

(e) Lastly from the small right-angled triangle $K\alpha L$, we obtain KL by the equation,

$$\sin KL = \tan \alpha L \times \cot K$$
$$= \tan 9°57'46'' \times \cot 43°43'17''$$

$\therefore K\angle = 10°35'7''$, αL being the celestial latitude of α *Arietis* for 1931 supposed to remain constant throughout

Thus at the time which we want to determine, the celestial longitude of α *Arietis* was

$$= -\gamma L$$
$$= -(\gamma K - KL)$$
$$= -44°56'44''$$

For 1931 A D, the mean celestial longitude of α *Arietis*, as stated before, was $= 36°\ 41'\ 50''$

Hence the total change till 1931 A D in the celestial longitude of *α Arietis* works out to have been $=36° 41' 50''+44° 56' 44''$
$=81° 38' 38''$[1], which represents a lapse of 5,925 years, ignoring the proper motion of *α Arietis* The date becomes 3995 B C *which may be set down as* 4000 B C

This was very nearly the date when, it is alleged, Tvastr communicated to Dadhīci the celestial signal of the heliacal rising of *α Arietis* for the advent of spring at the latitude of Kuruksetra

It may now be asked if the Vedic Hindus could accurately determine the beginning of spring The answer must be yes In the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*,[2] it is stated that when the sun turned north on the new-moon of *Māgha*, spring began one day after the new-moon of *Caitra* They thus counted full sixty days after the winter solstice day and got the beginning of spring The *Aitareya Brāhmana*[3] has described the method by which the Vedic Hindus could accurately ascertain the winter solstice days. Hence we may be quite sure that the Vedic Hindus could accurately find the beginnings of the Indian winter, spring and all the seasons of the year

We now proceed to find from our investigation the position of the equinoxes and solstices at the time we have determined, when the Vedic *Madhu-Vidyā* came into being, *viz*, the year 4000 B C

Burgess in his Translation of the *Sūryasiddhānta*,[4] has given the celestial longitudes and latitudes of the ecliptic stars for the year 560 A D Now at the time when the first visibility of *α Arietis* marked the beginning of spring, the celestial longitude of this star was $=-44° 57'$ nearly For 560 A D, Burgess gives the celestial longitude of *α Arietis* as $=17° 37'$ Hence the

[1] The calculation of this increase in the celestial longitude of *α Arietis* has been very kindly verified by Dr M N Saha, F R S, and Dr K M Basu, D Sc

[2] Kausītaki Brāhmana, XIX, 3

[3] *Aitareya Brāhmana*, XVIII, 18 I shall deal with this topic in a subsequent chapter named 'Solstice Days in Vedic Literature'

[4] Burgess's Translation of the *Sūryasiddhānta*, Calcutta University Reprint, p 243

total change in the longitude of the star becomes 62° 34′, which must be the longitude of the required vernal equinox in Burgess's table, the summer solstice, autumnal equinox and the winter solstice of the year 4000 B C will have respectively the longitudes 152°34′, 242°34′ and 332°34′ in the same table Now —

Long for 560 A D of the four cardinal points of the ecliptic for 4000 B C	Long for 560 A D of some selected stars	Remarks
Vernal Equinox, 62°34′	λ *Orionis*, 63°40	V Equinox near λ *Orionis*
Summer Solstice, 152°34′	β *Leonis*, 151°37′	S Solstice ,, β *Leonis*
Autumnal Equinox, 242°34′	λ *Scorpionis*, 244°53′	A Equinox ,, λ *Scorpionis*
Winter Solstice, 332°34′	α *Pegasi*, 333°27′	W Solstice ,, α *Pegasi*

Hence at the time (4000 B C) when the heliacal rising of α *Arietis* marked the beginning of spring at the latitude of Kuruksetra, the Vernal Equinox was in the constellation *Mrga-śiras* (Orion's Head), the Summer Solstice in the *Uttara Phalgunis* (β *Leonis*), Autumnal Equinox in *Mūlā* (λ *Scorpionis*) and the Winter Solstice in *Pūrva-Bhādrapada* (α *Pegasi*)

Here our interpretation of *Madhu-Vidyā* or the Science of spring leads us to the same antiquity of the Vedas as was sought to be established by Tilak, in his *Orion*[1] The present discussion corroborates Tilak's finding, I trust, with more definite and stronger reasons

It may not be out of place to note here the epigraphic evidence of the establishment of an independent state in Mitanni (bet meridians 38° and 40° E and bet 36° and 38° N parallels of latitude) in north Syria by a people named *Kharri* (? *Aryans*), as the following extracts from the *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol I, and the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol I, will show —

(1) *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol I, page 312

' In the reign of the *Khabur* and *Balih*, the state of Mitanni was eventually set up, ruled by a royal house and aristocracy of horse riding *Kharri* (? *Aryans*) and worshipping as we know

[1] *Orion or The Antiquity of the Vedas*, a book by B G Tilak (Poona, 1893)

from Cuniform documents of the Amarna age, the gods India, Varuna and the Nāsatya twins (the Aśvins) Moreover the chief god of the Kassites is said to have been *Shuriyash*—the Indian *Sūrya*, the sun '

(2) *Cambridge History of India*, Vol I, Ancient India, page 72

' In the German excavations at Boghaz Koi, the ancient Pteria, have been found inscriptions, containing as it appears the names of the deities which figure in the earliest Indian records, India, Varuna, and the great twin-brethren Nāsatyas The inscriptions date from about 1400 B C and the names appear not in the form which they took in the historical records of ancient Persia, but are, so far as syllabary will admit, identical with the forms, admittedly more original, which they show in the *Rg-Veda* '

The actual names of the gods as found in the cuniform tablet referred to above are given on page 320 of this work as *Mi-it-ra*, *V-ru-w-na*, *In-da-ra*, and *Na-sa-at-ti-ia*, which are readily recognized as Mitra, Varuna, Indra and the Nāsatyas

Here the epigraphic evidence is dated 1400 B C and it is not known if any earlier epigraphic evidence as to Vedic chronology may not be brought to light in future It is, therefore, premature to try to form any hypothesis as to the antiquity of the Vedas from this source In absence of epigraphic, we have to rely on literary evidences alone Our definite finding as to the antiquity of the Vedas must remain, so long as it is not contradicted by epigraphic evidences which may be brought to light in future I trust it is established that the civilization of the Vedic Hindus was earlier than that of the Indus Valley as evidenced by the remains at Mahenjo-Dāro

A Note to Chapter IV

Kuruksetra the Centre of Vedic Culture

In the preceding chapter we have taken Kuruksetra (30° N) itself as the centre of Vedic culture Here we want to set forth the reasons for this assumption of ours

In the *Satapatha Brāhmana*, XIV, 1, the first two verses run as follows —

"The gods Agni, Indra, Soma, Makha, Visnu and the Viśvedevas, except the two Aśvins performed a sacrificial session Their place of divine worship was Kuruksetra *Therefore people say that Kuruksetra is the gods' place of divine worship*"[1]

Eggeling's Translation

In another place of the same work, we have the statement that "Those gods are performing the sacrifice at Kuruksetra"[2]

(S Br I, 15, 13)

In the Maitrāyanī Samhitā also it is stated in two places that "The gods performed sacrifice at Kuruksetra"[3]

(II, 1, 4 and IV, 5, 9)

Again in the *Pañcavimśa Brāhmana* (XV, 10), we have "They (the participants of the *sattra*) undertake the consecration at the place (*i e*, to the south of the place) where the river *Sarasvatī* is lost in the sand of the desert" (Caland)

In the same work there is also a reference to the river Disadvatī, (XV, 10, 14-15)

Again in the *Manu Samhitā* we have[4] —

"The land which lies between the divine rivers the Sarasvatī and the Disadvatī, built by the gods, is called Brahmāvarta"

"The culture (behaviour and mode of living) which has been handed down by the successive generations, in that country, relating to the principal and intermediate castes, is called correct behaviour"

Kuruksetra, the Matsyas, the Pāñcālas and Sūrasenas constitute the land of Brahmarsi, which is next in importance to Brahmāvarta"

[1] Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index

देवा ह वै सत्त्रं निषेदुः । अग्निरिन्द्रः सोमो मखो विष्णुर्विश्वेदेवा अन्यत्रैवाश्विभ्याम् । तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनमास । तस्मादाहुः कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनमिति तस्माद्यत्र क्व च कुरुक्षेत्रस्य निगच्छति तदेव मन्यत इदं देवयजनम् इति तद्धि देवानां देवयजनम् ॥१, २॥

[2] कुरुक्षेत्रेऽमी देवा यज्ञं तन्वते ।   [3] देवा वै सत्त्रमासत कुरुक्षेत्रे ।

[4] सरस्वतीदृषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् । तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्तं प्रचक्षते ॥
तस्मिन् देशे य आचारः पारम्पर्यक्रमागतः । वर्णानां सान्तरालानां स सदाचार उच्यते ॥
कुरुक्षेत्रं च मत्स्याश्च पाञ्चालाः शूरसेनकाः । एष ब्रह्मर्षिदेशो वै ब्रह्मावर्तादनन्तरः ॥
एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः । स्वं स्वं चरित्रं शिक्षेरन् पृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः ॥

"From the Brāhmans born of this place, all men living in this world should learn their respective customs and manners"

Manu Samhitā, II, 17-20

An important point to note in this connection is that the river Sarasvatī rises from the Sivalik hills and is lost in the North Rajputana Desert, and is almost bisected by the 30° N parallel of latitude, and Kuruksetra also lies almost on the same parallel

Thus the Brāhmanas and the Manu Samhitā justify our assumption that Kuruksetra was the centre of Vedic culture

Then again we have other reasons to conclude that the Vedic Hindus lived not much further north than about 26° N In the next chapter we shall show that Indra, the rain giver, was the god of the summer solstice The Brāhmanas or those who found the seasons for sacrifice, raised up this god of the summer solstice like a bamboo pole [1] This shows that the summer solsticial point passed very near the zenith of the place where the Vedic Hindus lived This place could not be of much higher latitude than about 24° degrees and Kuruksetra has the latitude of about 30° degrees.

Secondly it is stated in the *Rg-Veda*, that the planet Jupiter was "being first born in the highest heaven of supreme light" [2] This refers to the discovery of Jupiter as a planet Now Jupiter could not have a celestial latitude exceeding about 1°45′, hence its greatest north declination could never exceed 26° If at the land of the Vedic Hindus, this planet was discovered in the highest heaven, the latitude of the place could not exceed 30° N

The Vedic rivers or the rivers mentioned in the *Rg-Veda* furnish additional proof that the land of the **Vedic Hindus** could not be outside India Not only do we have the mention of the seven rivers, we get the names of the Vipash, Satadru, etc.

All these facts lead us to conclude that in interpreting the astronomical references found in the Vedas, we should generally take Kuruksetra itself as the centre of Vedic culture, and we should not use any place outside India unless there are very strong grounds for such a hypothesis

[1] ब्रह्माणस्त्व शतक्रत उद्वंशमिव येमिरे । M I, 3, 1

[2] बृहस्पति प्रथम जायमानो महो ज्योतिष परमे व्योमन् । M IV, 50, 4

CHAPTER V

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

When Indra became Maghavan

The Vedic god Indra was the 'shedder of rain' (vrsan), 'wielder of the thunder-bolt' (vajrin) and 'killer of Vrtra or Ahi' (vrtrahan) His former great deeds are thus told by *rsi* Hiranya-stūpa in the *Rg-Veda* M I, 32, thus[1] —

1 'I declare the former valorous deeds of Indra, which the Thunderer has achieved he clove the cloud, he cast the waters down (to earth), he broke (a way) for the torrents of the mountain

2 He clove the cloud, seeking refuge on the mountain Tvastr sharpened his far-whirling bolt the flowing waters (rivers) quickly hastened to the ocean, like cows hastening to their calves

3 * * * * *

* * Maghavan took his shaft, the thunder-bolt, and with it struck the first born of the clouds.

4 Inasmuch as, Indra, as thou hast divided the first born of the clouds, thou hast destroyed the delusions of the deluders and then engendering the sun, the dawn, the firmament, thou hast not left an enemy (to oppose thee)

1 इन्द्रस्य नु वीर्याणि प्रवोचं यानि चकार प्रथमानि वज्री
अहन्नहिमन्वपस्ततर्द प्रवक्षणा अभिनत् पर्व्वतानाम् ॥१॥
अहन्नहिं पर्वते शिश्रियाणं त्वष्टास्मै वज्रं स्वर्यं ततक्ष ।
वाश्राऽइव धेनव स्यन्दमानाऽञ्जः समुद्रमवजग्मुराप ॥२॥
वृषायमाणो वृणीत सोमं त्रिकद्रुकेष्वपिबत् सुतस्य ।
आसायकं मघवादत्तवज्रमहन्नेनं प्रथमजामहीनाम् ॥३॥
यदिन्द्राहन् प्रथमजामहीनामान्मायिनाममिनाः प्रोतमायाः ।
आत्सूर्यं जनयन् द्यामुषासं तादीत्नाशत्रुं न किलाविवित्से ॥४॥
अहन् वृत्रं वृत्रतरं व्यंसमिन्द्रो वज्रेण महता वधेन ।
स्कन्धांसीव कुलिशेनाविवृक्णाहिः शयतऽउपपृक् पृथिव्या' ॥५॥

5 With his vast destroying thunder-bolt Indra struck the darkling mutilated Vrtra as the trunks of trees are felled by the axe, so lies Ahi prostrate on the earth

6 The arrogant Vrtra as if unequalled, defied Indra, the mighty hero, the destroyer of many, the scatterer of foes,—he has not escaped the contact of the fate of Indra s enemies The foe of Indra has crushed the (banks of the) rivers [1]

7 Having neither hand nor foot, he defied Indra who struck him with the thunder-bolt upon his mountain-like shoulder like one emasculated who pretends to virility, then Vrtra, mutilated of many members, slept

8 The waters that delight the minds of men, flow over him recumbent on this earth, as a river bursts through its broken banks Ahi has been prostrated beneath the feet of waters which Vrtra by his might had obstructed

9 The mother of Vitra was bending over her son, when Indra struck her nether part with his shaft, so the mother was above and the son underneath, and *Dānu* slept (with her son), like a cow with its calf

10 The waters carry off the nameless body of Vrtra, tossed into the midst of the never-stopping, never-resting currents The foe of Indra has slept a long darkness

11 The waters, the wives of the destroyer, guarded by Ahi, stood obstructed, like the cows by Panin, but by laying Vrtra, Indra set open the cave that had confined them

अयोद्धेव दुर्मदऽ आहिजुह्वे महावीरं तुविबाधमृजीषं ।
नातारिदस्य समृतिं वधानां संरुजानाः पिपिषऽइन्द्रशत्रुः ॥६॥
अपादहस्तोऽ अपृतन्यदिन्द्रमास्यवज्रमधिसानौ जघान ।
वृष्णोवध्रिः प्रतिमानं बुभूषन् पुरुत्रावृत्रोऽ अशयद्व्यस्तः ॥७॥
नदं न भिन्नममुया शयानं मनोरुहाणाऽ अतियन्त्यापः ।
याश्चिद्वृत्रो महिना पर्यतिष्ठत्तासामहिः पत्सुतःशीर्बभूव ॥८॥
नीचावयाऽ अभवद्वृत्रपुत्रेन्द्रोऽ अस्याऽ अववधर्जभार ।
उत्तरासूरधरः पुत्रऽ आसीद्दानुः शये सहवत्सा न धेनुः ॥९॥
अतिष्ठन्तीनामनिवेशनानां काष्ठानां मध्ये निहितं शरीरम् ।
वृत्रस्य निण्यं विचरन्त्यापो दीर्घं तमऽ आशयदिन्द्रशत्रुः ॥१०॥
दासपत्नीरहिगोपाऽ अतिष्ठन् निरुद्धाऽ आपः पणिनेव गावः ।
अपां बिलमपिहितं यदासीद्वृत्रं जघन्वाँऽ अपतद्ववार ॥११॥

[1] By the great volume of his watery body

12 When the single resplendent Vrtra returned the blow (which had been inflicted), Indra, by thy thunder-bolt, thou becomest (furious) like a horse's tail Thou hast rescued the kine , thou hast won, Hero, the Soma juice , thou hast let loose the seven rivers to flow '

(Wilson's *Rg-Veda* Transtation)

The sage or *rsi* who thus sings in praise of these great former valorous deeds of Indra was, as we have said before, Hiranyastūpa, who speaks of himself in the following terms (*Rg-Veda*, I, 31, 11 and 17)[1] —

' The gods formerly made thee, Agni the living general of the mortal Nahusa they made Ilā, the instructress of Manu, when the son of my father was born '

' Pure Agni, who goest about (to receive oblations), go in thy presence to the hall of sacrifice, as did Manu, and Angiras, and Yayāti and others of old '

We conclude that the *rsi* lived sometime after King Yayāti of the lunar race The story of the great deeds of Indra we have quoted above, divested of allegory, suggests to us that this great god was none other than the god of the summer solstice

All Vedic scholars agree that Vrtra or Ahi means the cloud and the fight of Indra, the rain-giver, with Vrtra is a mere allegory. The clouds are represented as a demon and quite unwilling to part with their watery stores until assailed and sundered with the thunder-bolt hurled by Indra Wilson explains that " the cloud, personified as a demon named Ahi or Vrtra, is represented as combating Indra with all the attributes of a personal enemy, and as suffering in the battle mutilation, wounds and death [2] " The Indian monsoons which bring in the rains

अश्व्योवारोऽअभवस्तदिन्द्र सृकेयत्वा प्रत्यह देव एकः ।
अजयोगाऽअजय शूरसोममवासृज सर्तवे सप्तसिन्धून् ॥१२॥

1 Wilson's Introduction to his *Rg Veda* Translation

2 त्वामग्ने प्रथममायुमायवे देवाऽअकृण्वन्नहुषस्य विश्पतिम् ।
इळामकृण्वन्मनुषस्य शासनीं पितुर्यत्पुत्रो मम कस्य जायते ॥
मनुष्वदग्नेऽअङ्गिरस्वदङ्गिरो ययातिवत्सदने पूर्ववच्छुचे ।
अच्छया ह्यावहा दैव्य जनमासादय बर्हिषि यक्षि च प्रियम् ॥

really burst about the 22nd of June, there is generally a drought which lasts for about a month or so, before the monsoons come. Drought itself is also represented as a demon named Śusna (I, 101, 2, I, 33 12 and I, 103, 8, etc) who is also killed by Indra When Vrtra has been killed, the waters of the sky are set free to fall upon the earth and the seven rivers of the Punjab are filled up to the banks and roll quickly towards the sea The seven rivers are undoubtedly the river Indus with five tributaries from the east and one from the west

Indra was thus the god of the summer solstice, and as Indian rains begin when the sun reaches the summer solstice, Indra's fight with Vrtra was or is an annual affair According to Kālidāsa 'Indra withdrew his rain-giving (or annual) bow with the coming of autumn'[1] Every year Indra has thus to fight Vrtra or dark-clouds to set free the waters of the sky to fall upon the earth

That Indra is identified with the sun at the summer solstice is thus expressed in *Rg-Veda*, I, 10, 1, thus —

'The chanters of the Gāyatrī hymn thee, Śatakratu, the worshippers of the sun praise thee, the Brahmānas raise thee aloft like a bamboo pole'[2]

This reminds us of a passage from the *Aitareya Brāhmana*, ch xviii, 18 which says that '*by this Ekavimśa, the gods raised up the sun towards the highest point of the heavens*'[1] The Vedic Hindus had found by observation that the sun remained stationary, *i e*, without any change of meridian zenith distance for 21 days near the summer solstice, they called the eleventh day or the middle day of this period, the *Ekavimśa* or the true summer solstice day Here *Brahmānah* of the *Rg-Veda* were observers of the sun for determining the *Ekavimśa* day

Hence Indra is identified with the sun of the summer solstice day.

Thus far we have tried to explain who this Vedic god Indra was—that Indra the rain-giver was the god of the summer

[1] वार्षिकं संजहारेन्द्रो धनुर्जैत्रं रघुर्दधौ in the *Raghuvamśa*,

[2] गायन्ति त्वा गायत्रिणोऽर्चन्त्यर्कमर्किणः । ब्रह्माणस्त्वा शतक्रत उद्वंशमिव येमिरे ॥

एतेन वै देवा एकविंशेनाऽऽदित्यं स्वर्गाय लोकायोदयच्छन् ।

solstice and that his place in the heavens coincided with that of the sun at the summer solstice Stationed at his place Indra's another deed may here be stated —*Rg-Veda*, I, 7, 3—*viz*, that 'Indra in order to make the duration of light longer elevates the sun in the sky '[1]

We next pass on to consider when Indra became Vrtrahan or killer of Vrtra in those ancient times The *Rg-Vedic* text on this point runs as follows —"इन्द्रो मघैर्मघवाँ वृत्रहाऽभुवत्" (M X, 23, 2)

' Indra by (the heliacal rising of) the *Maghās* became Maghavan, and thus became the slayer of Vrtra '

Here the word ' Maghavan ' means ' one that owns Magha ,' the word ' Magha ' to us means the constellation *Maghās* consisting of the stars, α, η, γ, δ, μ and ϵ *Leonis* We understand when at the latitude of Kuruksetra, the most prominent star, *Leonis*, of this group became first visible in the east at dawn, the sun reached the Indra's place or the summer solstice We cannot accept that the word ' Magha ' can mean anything else than the constellation *Maghā* If Indra is ' a personification of a phenomena of the firmament,'[2] and ' Vrtra ' or cloud is also another phenomena of the firmament, the word ' Magha ' must also mean another phenomena of the same firmament, *viz*, the constellation *Maghās* Besides, if ' Magha ' be here taken to mean ' wealth '—its acquisition cannot possibly increase the fighting capability of this Indra Further instances are not wanting in Sanskrit literature where the word ' Magha ' has been used in place of *Maghā*[3]—the 10th lunar constellation counting from the *Aśvins*

It may yet be urged why *' Maghai-y-Maghavā,'* etc , should mean the heliacal rising of the *Maghās*, and not the conjunction of the sun with the *Maghās* (or α *Leonis*), as indicative of the time of the summer solstice the date for which was 2350 B C The date of the Bhārata battle was 2449 B C as we have

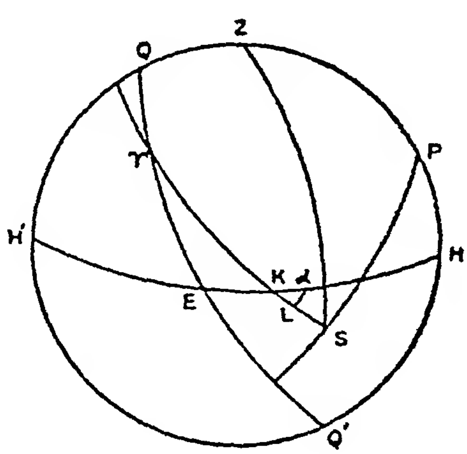
[1] इन्द्रो दीर्घाय चक्षसऽ आसूर्यं रोहयद्दिवि ।

[2] Wilson's Introduction to his *Rg Veda* Translation,

[3] (*a*) "अश्विनीमघमूलाना तिस्रो गण्डान्तनाडिका ," (*b*) "सौम्यानिलेशमघरोहिणमूलहस्ते," (*c*) "मघे सशोकाप्यघभेऽदितीशे ।"

established in Chapters I, II, and III Here the *rsi* is Vimada who is spoken of as the son of Indra or of Prajāpati and must be much anterior to the Pāndavas This Vimada is spoken of by the Kaksivat in M 1, 116, 1 ('who gave a bride to the youthful Vimada' as the passage runs) We are thus unable to assign the date of the phenomena '*Maghai-r-Maghavā*,' etc, to 2350 B C In the Chapter on *Madhu-Vidyā* or the Science of Spring, we have shown that the practical rule for detecting the advent of spring was taken as the heliacal rising of the star α *Arietis* about 4000 B C At this age, the seasons were determined no doubt by observation of the sun at the summer and winter solstices, and for future prediction of the beginning spring or of the rains, the heliacal rising of some bright stars were noted, *viz*, α *Arietis* for the beginning of spring and α *Leonis* for the advent of the rains Our investigation will show that both these rules for the beginnings of spring and the rains belonged almost to the same age

We are thus led to conclude that when Indra, the shedder of rain, became Maghavan, *i e*, when he began to function with the heliacal rising of *Maghā* (or α *Leonis*), it was a Vedic age when people counted the seasons by the heliacal rising of some bright star at dawn To put it plainly it was the age when at the latitude of Kuruksetra (lat 30° N) the sun reached summer solstice on the day of the first visibility of α *Leonis*



Let the above figure represent the observer's sphere at the latitude of Kuruksetra, HPZQH′ is the meridian, HαKEH′ the horizon, QEQ′ the celestial equator, Z and P are respectively the zenith and the celestial pole

Let S be the position of the sun at 18° below the horizon, so that ZS=108° The sun is at the summer solstice

We take ω the obliquity of ecliptic=24°6′35″ which was true for 4000 B C In the figure γKS is the ecliptic, cutting the horizon at the point K The point α on the horizon is the position of α *Leonis* when it is just on the horizon, although it would be raised above it by about 35′ due to refraction from α at αL be drawn perpendicular to the ecliptic so that γL was the celestial longitude of α *Leonis* at the time we propose to determine.

The celestial longitude of α *Leonis* for 1931 A D =148°52′11″, the celestial latitude of α *Leonis* for 1931 A D =0°27′26″, which is supposed to remain constant

(1) In the triangle ZPS, the side ZP=60°, PS=65°53′25″ and ZS=108°, the angle ZPS is given by

$$\tan\frac{ZPS}{2}=\sqrt{\frac{\sin\frac{ZS+PS-ZP}{2}\ \sin\frac{ZS+ZP-PS}{2}}{\sin\frac{ZS+PS+ZP}{2}\ \sin\frac{PS+ZP-ZS}{2}}}$$

$\therefore$ ZPS=130°29′16″,

$\therefore$ EPS=40°29′16″,

$\therefore$ γE=49°30′44″

(2) In the triangle KEγ, the four consecutive parts are, $\angle$KEγ =120°, Eγ=49°30′44″, EγK=24°6′35″ and γK Hence γK is given by,

$$\cot\gamma K \sin 49°30'44''$$
$$=\cos 49°30'44''\times\cos 24°6'35''-\tan 30°\times\sin 24°6'35''$$

We use the auxiliary angle given by

$$\tan\phi=\frac{\tan 30°}{\cos 49°30'44''},\quad\therefore\quad \phi=41°38'38''$$

$$\therefore\quad \cot\gamma K=\frac{\cot 49°30'44''\times\cos 65°45'13''}{\cos 41°38'38''}$$

$\therefore \gamma$K=64°50′38″

(3) In the same triangle $KE\gamma$, the angle K is given by

$$\text{Sin } K = \frac{\text{Sin } \gamma E \times \text{Sin } 120^\circ}{\text{Sin } \gamma \bar{E}}$$

$\angle K = 46^\circ 41' 29''$

(4) In the triangle $K\alpha L$, we have $K = 46^\circ 41' 29''$, the angle L is a rt angle, and $\alpha L = 27' 26''$

$\therefore$ $KL = 25' 51''$

We have found before that $\gamma K = 64^\circ 50' 38''$

Now $KL = 25' 51''$

$\therefore$ $\gamma L = 65^\circ 16' 29''$

Now the celestial longitude of α *Leonis* for 1931 A D $= 148^\circ 52' 11''$ and the celestial longitude of α *Leonis* for the reqd past date $= 65^\circ 16' 29''$

$\therefore$ the increase in celestial longitude of α *Leonis* during the entire period $= 83^\circ 35' 42''$

The mean precession rate for the period $= 49''$ 5938

Annual proper motion of α *Leonis* $= 0''$ 2478,

$\therefore$ the mean Annual variation in longitude of α *Leonis* $= 49''$ 3460

$\therefore$ lapse of years till 1931 A D $= 6100$ nearly

$\therefore$ the Date $= 4170$ B C [1]

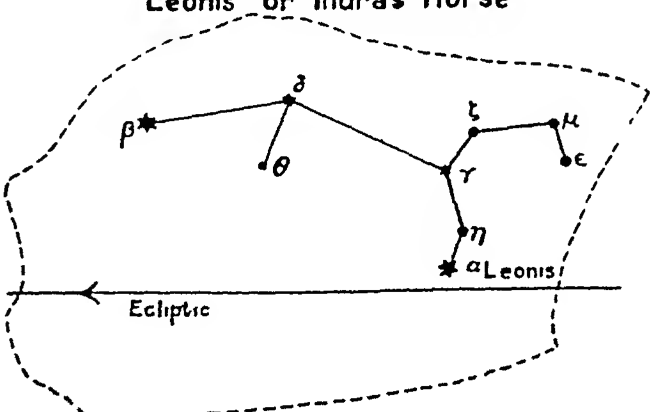
Hence 4170 B C was the date when the Vedic god Indra, the god of the summer solstice, became *Maghavan* We have now to find the position of the equinoxes and the solstices about 4170 B C The longitude of *Regulus* in 560 A D was 129°49′ according to Burgess In 4170 B C the same was =65°16′, thus the change in the celestial longitude of *Regulus* was till 560 A D =64°33′ nearly Now the celestial longitude of λ *Orionis* was in 560 A D =63°40′ Hence vernal equinox for 4170 B C was near to the ecliptic place of λ *Orionis*, and in a similar manner the summer solstice near to β *Leonis*, autumnal equinox near λ *Scorpionis* and the winter solstice near α *Pegasi* in 4170 B C In the Indian way, the vernal equinox was in the *Mrgaśiras*, S solstice in the *U Phalgunis*, A equinox in the *Mūlās*, and W solstice in the *P Bhādrapadas* These were almost the same as in 4000 B.C as might be expected.

[1] If the sun s depression below the horizon were taken at 17°, the calculated date would come out to be nearly 4000 B C,

We have established above that Indra began to function when α *Leonis* or the constellation *Maghās* was heliacally visible at Kuruksetra about the year 4170 B C Before the heliacal visibility of α *Leonis* or *Maghā*, the constellation of *Aślesā* or Ahi, *i.e* , *Hydrae* became first visible Vrtra is also called *Ahi* in the *Rg-Veda* , the allegory implied is perhaps that *Ahi* means the clouds that were seen in the sky from the rising of *Ahi* or *Aślesā*, which did not yield rain till the rising of *Maghā* (*Regulus*) Hence Vrtra also meant *Ahi* or clouds which were unwilling to part with their watery stores From the rising of *Ahi* till the rising of *Maghā* (*Regulus*), was the period of drought called *Śusna* in the *Rg-Veda*

Again Indra had two other names Śatakratu and Valabhit The first of these names means very probably that the phenomena of the bursting of the Indian monsoons and of the first visibility of Maghās were established as synchronous in the course of observations extending over many (literally a hundred) years Hence Indra, the god of summer solstice, got the name Śatakratu (the performer of hundred sacrifices) Again the demon Vala meant perhaps black clouds and his cave also existed in the clouds and when Indra opened the cave of Vala and rescued the cattle (गो and गो also means water), Indra really clove the clouds and set the waters from them free to fall on the earth So if Indra was Valabhit, he was none other than the shedder of rain (*Rg-Veda*, I, 11, 5)

Leonis or Indra's Horse



One thing more that strikes us in this connection is that the so called horse of Indra was most probably the constellation *Leo*, which is ordinarily likened to a lion. It may be likened to a horse as well, as in the above diagram —

The stars ϵ, μ, *Leonis* forming the head of Indra's horse, the line joining γ and δ *Leonis* the back, α and θ *Leonis* the two legs, β *Leonis* the end of the tail Indra in his car took his seat a little behind β *Leonis*

As I have said before, in the first Chapter on '*Madhu-Vidyā*,' it has been established that when the first visibility of the Aśvins in the east was the signal for the advent of spring, the time was about 4000 B C These two Chapters show that about 4000 B C the Vedic Hindus recognized the coming of the Indian spring and of the rains, by the heliacal risings of α *Arietis* and α *Leonis* respectively

This practice is similar to that of the ancient Egyptians, of reckoning the year by the heliacal rising of α *Canis Majoris* or *Sirius* In Homer's *Iliad*, we find in Bk V, that this star *Sirius* is called "the summer star which shines very brightly," at least thus the translator interprets it Again in *Iliad* Bk XXII, is mentioned a 'star which rises in autumn' which people call the "dog of *Orion*" It seems that the same star *Sirius* was both the summer star and the autumn star in Homer's time In such a case very probably the first visibility of the star at dawn showed the beginning of summer in Greece and the position of the same star higher up at dawn, the beginning of autumn

It now appears that the practice of recognizing the seasons by the heliacal risings at some or other of the bright stars was followed by all ancient nations

CHAPTER VI

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Rbhus and Their Awakening by the Dog

In the preceding two chapters, we have spoken of the constellation of "the Car of the Aśvins" and of "the Horse or the Horses of Indra" In the present chapter we shall see who were the makers of the above constellations in the earliest Vedic times The story of Dadhīci will also appear as mere allegory from what follows The Rbhus, whose deeds we are going to describe here, were of the race of *Angiras* and were exceptionally brilliant men of those times and while living they were entitled to the share of the sacrificial portion with the gods and after death they were supposed to be dwellers in the orb of the sun The first hymn of the Rg-Veda addressed to them is M I 20, and here the Rsi is Medhātithi, and runs as follows[1] —

1 "This hymn, the bestower of riches, has been addressed by the sages, with their own mouths,[2] to the (class of) divinities having birth"

2 "They who created *mentally* for Indra the horses that are harnessed at his words, have partaken of the sacrifice performed with holy acts"

Here the 'horses' of Indra may be a single-bodied but a two-headed horse, being represented by the constellation *Leonis* An alternative interpretation would perhaps be that the two stars *Castor* and *Pollux* may have been taken for Indra's horses, while Indra (=Maghavan) had his seat at α *Leonis* (Maghā) This interpretation would be in harmony with the Greek tradition of

[1] अयं देवाय जन्मने स्तोमो विप्रेभिरासया । अकारि रत्नधातमः ॥१॥
य इन्द्राय वचोयुजा ततक्षुर्मनसा हरी । शमीभिर्यज्ञमाशत ॥२॥

—Rg Veda, M I. 20

[2] This shows that this hymn was not actually composed by Medhātithi

taking the stars *Castor* and *Pollux* as horsemen Between α *Leonis* and the stars *Castor* and *Pollux*, there lies no bright ecliptic star These two stars rise before α *Leonis*, the seat of Indra, on whose heliacal rising at Kuruksetra the rains set in in those times The next *rcas* of the hymn run as follows [1] —

3 " They constructed for the Nāsatyas, a universally moving and easy car, and a cow yielding milk "

Here the " car of the Aśvins " was the star-group formed of the stars α, β and γ *Arietis* together with α *Triangulum*, of which α and β *Arietis* with α *Triangulum* formed the stable triangle, α, β and γ *Arietis* the head of the horse, while α a nd β *Arietis* were symbols for the Aśvins

4 " The Rbhus, uttering unfailing prayers, endowed with rectitude and succeeding (in all pious acts) made their parents young."

As we are concerned with the deeds of Rbhus we quote only—

6. " The Rbhus have divided unto four the new ladle, the work of the divine Tvastr "

8 " Offerers (of sacrifices), they held (a mortal existence), by pious acts they obtained a share of sacrifices with the gods "

This hymn thus narrated the deeds of the Rbhus and the honoured position which they attained by those good deeds, *viz*, privilege of having the sacrificial portion with the gods

The next *rsi* to bear witness to the above great deeds of the Rbhus was Kutsa in the hymns M I 110-11 The most significant *rcas* are the following —

4 " Associated with the priests, and quickly performing the holy rites, they, being yet mortals, acquired immortality and the sons of Sudhanvan, the Rbhus, brilliant as the sun, became connected with the ceremonies of the year " [2]

[1] तक्षन्नासत्याभ्यां परिज्मानं सुखं रथम् । तक्षन् धेनुं सबर्दुघाम् ॥३॥
युवाना पितरा पुनः सत्यमन्त्रा ऋजूयवः । ऋभवो विष्ट्यक्रत ॥४॥
उत त्यं चमसं नवं त्वष्टुर्देवस्य निष्कृतम् । अकर्त चतुरः पुनः ॥६॥
अधारयन्त वह्नयो भजन्त सुकृत्यया । भागं देवेषु यज्ञियम् ॥८॥

—Rg Veda, M I 20

[2] विष्ट्वी शमी तरणित्वेन वाघतो मर्तासः सन्तो अमृतत्वमानशुः ।
सौधन्वना ऋभवः सूरचक्षसः संवत्सरे समपृच्यन्त धीतिभिः ॥

M I 110, 4

The above verse shows the great esteem and position which the Ṛbhus had won while living amongst the men of their time

5 "Lauded by the bystanders, the Ṛbhus, with a sharp weapon, meted out the single sacrificial ladle, like a field (measured by a rod), soliciting the best libations, and desiring to participate of sacrificial food amongst the gods "[1]

6 "To the leaders (of the sacrifice), dwelling in the firmament, we present, as with a laddle, the appointed clarified butter and praise with knowledge those Ṛbhus, who, having equalled the velocity of the protector (of the universe, the sun), ascended to the region of heaven, through the offerings of sacrificial food "[1]

Here the Ṛbhus are described as have ascended the orb of the sun by the merit of having offered the sacrificial food to the gods We shall have further accounts of their life after death as understood by Dīrghatamas and Vāmadeva

"The Ṛbhus, possessed of skill in their work, constructed for the Aśvins a well-built car, they framed the vigorous horses bearing Indra, they gave youthful existence to their parents, they gave to the calf its accompanying mother "[2]

We next pass on to the hymns of Dīrghatamas of M I 161, the *ṛcas* 6, 11 and 13

"Indra has caparisoned his horses the Aśvins have harnessed their car Bṛhaspati has accepted the omniform cow therefore, Ṛbhu, Vibhvā and Vāja go to the gods, doers of good deeds, enjoy your sacrificial portion "[3]

Here the import is that Indra begins to function or that the rains set in, when the constellation *Leonis* or Indra's horse rises heliacally, and that the rising in the same way of the car of the Aśvins brings in spring, and Bṛhaspati or Jupiter has been

[1] क्षेत्रमिव विममुस्तेजनेनँऽ एकपात्रमृभवो जेहमान। उपस्तुताऽ उपम नाधमानाऽ अमर्त्येषु श्रवऽ इच्छमाना ॥ आमनीषामंतरिक्षस्य नृभ्यः स्रुचेव घृत जुहवाम विद्मना। तरणित्वायेपितुरस्य सश्चिरऽ ऋभवो वाजमरुह दिवोरज ॥

M I 110, 5 and 6

[2] तक्षन्रथ सुवृत विद्मनापसस्तक्षन् हरी इन्द्रवाहा वृषण् वसू। तक्षण् पितृभ्यामृभवो युवद्वयस्तक्षन् वत्साय मातरं स चाभुवम् ॥

M I. 111, 1

[3] इन्द्रो हरी युयुजेऽ अश्विना रथं बृहस्पतिर्विश्वरूपामुपाजत।
ऋभुर्विभ्वावाजो देवांऽ अगच्छत स्वपसो यज्ञिय भागमैतन ॥

M I 161 6

discovered as a wandering body in the sky (here called the omniform cow) These are indeed great deeds which entitled the Rbhus to enjoy the sacrificial portion with the gods They were great as observers of the heavens who had discovered the celestial signals for the coming of the rains and of spring, they had also discovered the planet Jupiter

"Rbhus, the leaders (of the rains), you have caused the grass to grow upon the high places, you have caused the waters to flow over the low places, for (the promotion of) good works as you have reposed for a while in the dwelling of the unapprehensible (unconcealable more properly) sun, so desist not to-day from the discharge of this your function "[1]

We conclude that the Rbhus were also leaders of the rainy season, they slept for a while in the orb of the sun with the first bursting in of the Indian summer monsoons, *i e*, from the time of the summer solstice Here the idea of sleep of the Rbhus at this time, formed the basis of the Purānic Hindu faith that Visnu and other gods sleep during the entire period of the rains lasting for four months of the Indian rains At the place of the first Aryan settlers, which we have taken to have been near Kuruksetra, there was a clearing up of the sky for some time after this first bursting of rains Here Dīrghatamas does not tell us how long the Rbhus sleep in the orb of the sun, but that so long as they sleep the sky remains cloudy and the grass grows on the high places and water is spread over the low places In the next verse we are told that the Rbhus are awakened by the Dog—when the clearing up of the sky follows the first bursting of the monsoons.

"Rbhus, reposing in the solar orb, you inquire, 'who awakens us, unapprehensible (unconcealable) sun to this office of sending rain?' Sun replies 'the awakener is the Dog and in the year you again to-day light up this world' "[2]

[1] उद्वत्स्वस्माऽ अकृणोतनातृण निवत्स्वप स्वपस्यया नर' ।
अगोह्यस्य यदसस्तनागृहे तदद्येदमृभवो नानु गच्छथ ॥

M I 161, 11

[2] सुषुप्वासऽ ऋभवस्तदपृच्छतागोह्यकऽ इद नोऽ अबूबुधत् ।
श्वान वस्तो बोधयितारमब्रवीत् सवत्सरऽ इदमद्याव्यख्यत ॥

M I 161, 13

Here the sun is taken to exhort the Ṛbhus reposing in his orb to clear up the sky on the call of the Dog We are inclined to take, that this call of the Dog means the heliacal rising of the Dog-star or α *Canis Majoris*, *Sirius* or the *Sothis* which was the Egyptian name of the star

We next pass on to the following *ṛc* by Vāmadeva

" When the Ṛbhus, reposing for twelve days, remained in the hospitality of the unconcealable sun, they rendered the fields fertile, they led forth the rivers, plants sprung upon the waste and waters spread over the low places "[1]

From this statement it appears that in Vāmadeva's time, the Ṛbhus were taken to sleep for 12 days in the orb of the sun when they were awakened by the rising of the dog-star

Hence we conclude that in Vāmadeva's time the heliacal rising of the dog-star took place twelve days after the sun reached the summer solstice Now on the basis arrived at above, we determine the time of Vāmadeva as shown below, supposing that he also lived at the latitude of Kurukṣetra (30°N)

At the time we are going to determine, the heliacal rising of *Sirius* (α *Canis Majoris*) took place, at the latitude of Kurukṣetra, twelve days after the sun had reached the summer solstice So the sun's true longitude was then $90° + 12°$ or $102°$ nearly and the star came on the eastern horizon when the sun was 18° below it

At the epoch 1931 0, the star α-*Canis Majoris* had its

$$R\ A = 6\ h\ \ 42\ m\ \ 6\ 524\ s$$

$$Dec = -16°37'13''$$

and the obliquity of the ecliptic $\omega = 23°26'54''$

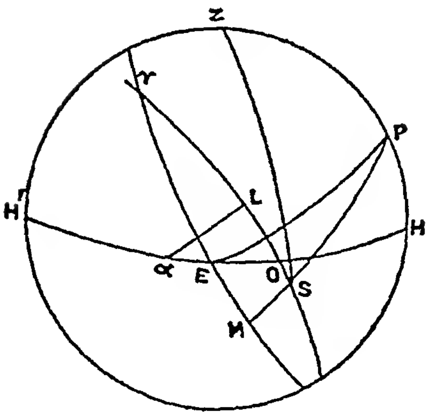
By transformation of the co-ordinates, we get

$$Long = 103°7'52''$$

$$Lat = -39°35'24''$$, this latitude is supposed to remain nearly constant since the time of Vāmadeva

[1] द्वादश द्यून्यदगोह्यस्यातिथ्ये रणन्नृभवः ससन्त ।
सुक्षेत्राकृण्वन्ननयन्त सिन्धून् धन्वातिष्ठन्नोषधीर्निम्नमापः ॥

M IV 33 7,



Let the above figure represent the observer's celestial sphere at the latitude of Kurukṣetra (30°N) Here HPZH' is the observer's meridian HOEαH' the horizon, γEM the celestial equator and γLS the ecliptic S, indicates the sun's position at 18° below the horizon and α is the point on the horizon where α *Canis Majoris* rose at that time Z and P respectively denote the Zenith and the celestial pole of the observer

Now the following quantities are known —

γS = true long of the sun = 102° (1)

$\angle E\gamma S$ = obliquity of the ecliptic at the required epoch which is assumed to be about 2700 B C = 24°0′ (2)

In the triangle γSM, the above two parts are known and the $\angle SM\gamma = 90°$

Hence the declination of the sun = SM = 23°27′N (3)

and the R A ,, ,, = γM = 103°6′ . . (4)

Now in the triangle ZPS,

ZP = 60°, PS = 66°33′ and ZS = 108°.

The angle ZPS is given by

$$\tan \frac{ZPS}{2} = \sqrt{\frac{\sin \frac{ZS+PS-PZ}{2} \times \sin \frac{ZS+PZ-PS}{2}}{\sin \frac{ZS+PS+PZ}{2} \times \sin \frac{PS+PZ-ZS}{2}}},$$

whence we find the $\angle ZPS$ = 129°46′ (5)

Subtract from it the $\angle ZPE$ which is 90°, we find the angle MPE or the arc ME = 39°46′ (6)

Again $\gamma E = \gamma M - ME$ = 103°6′ − 39°46′ = 63°20′ ... (7)

Now in the triangle γEO, $\gamma E = 63°20'$,

$$\angle E\gamma O = 24°, \ \angle OE\gamma = 90° + 30° = 120°$$

So the other arc γO is found from

$$\cot\gamma O \times \sin\ 63°20' = \cos 24° \times \cos 63°20' - \tan 30° \times \sin 24°$$

Put $$\tan\phi = \frac{\tan 30°}{\cos 63°20'}, \text{ whence } \phi = 52°8'\ 5$$

$$\cot\gamma O \times \sin 63°20' = \frac{\cos 63°20' \times \cos(52°8'\ 5 + 24°)}{\cos 52°8'\ 5}$$

$$\cot\gamma O = \frac{\cot 63°20' \times \cos 76°8'\ 5}{\cos 52°8'\ 5}$$

Hence $\gamma O = 78°54'\ 6$ (8)

Again from the same triangle

$$\sin\gamma OE = \frac{\sin 63°20' \times \sin 120°}{\sin 78°55'}$$

So the $\angle\gamma OE = 52°3'$. (9)

Lastly we come to the triangle αLO,

where $\alpha L = 39°35'\ 4$ (latitude of the star)

$\angle\alpha OL = 52°3'$ end the angle at L is a rt angle

Hence $\sin OL = \tan\alpha L \times \cot\alpha OL$

$$OL = 40°9'5 \qquad (10)$$

Now from the results (8) and (10) we can easily find the longitude of the star at the required epoch, thus —

$$\begin{array}{l} \gamma O = 78°54'\ 6 \\ \underline{OL = 40°9\ 5} \\ \gamma L = 38°45' \end{array}$$

$=$ longitude at the required time

$$\begin{array}{lr} \text{Long in 1931 0 A D} = & 103°\ 8' \\ \text{,, at the epoch} = & \underline{38°45'} \\ \text{Increase in the celestial long} = & 64°23' \end{array}$$

As a first approximation the above increase in the celestial longitude of the star indicates a lapse of 4636 years up to 1931 A D.

The mean rate of precession during this period is found to be 49″ 7476 seconds per year. The annual proper motion of the star in longitude $= -0''\ 3356$ Hence the annual variation in longitude$=49''\ 4120$ The elapsed year till 1931 A D becomes *4690* years

Hence the required time of Vāmadeva comes out to be about *2760* B C

Now at the time of these rsis, the Rbhus were already dwellers in the solar orb or they had become gods having birth In the previous two chapters on Madhu-Vidyā and Indra=Maghavan, we have ascertained that they lived at Kuruksetra about 4000 B C

If our interpretation be correct, it is proved that the Vedic Hindus of Vāmadeva's time reckoned the year by the heliacal rising of the *Sothis* or the dog-star as was done by the ancient Egyptians

CHAPTER VII

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

The Tradition of Indra's Victory over the Asuras

The function of hoisting Indra's flag was an important festival in ancient India In the *Mahābhārata* there can be found five or six references to the hoisting of the *Indradhvaja* (Indra's flag) the first of which is to be found in the *Ādi-parva* in the story of Tapatī and Samvarana, the second in the *Bhīsma-parva* describing how the hero fell on his 'bed of arrows', the third and the fourth in the *Drona-parva* describing the fight with maces between Bhīma and Śalya and also that between Abhimanyu and the son of Duhśāsana, and the fifth in the *Śalya Parva* describing the death of Śalya The descriptions are confined to the falling of a princely and tall warrior on the ground compared to the *Indradhvaja* or Indra's flag staff when laid down on the ground The hoisting of Indra's flag, therefore, was a very ancient custom The lowering of the flag staff was also perhaps an important

1 क्षितौ निपतितं काले इन्द्रध्वजमिवोच्छ्रितम् ।
तं हि दृष्ट्वा महेष्वासं निरस्तं पतितं भुवि ॥

MBh, *Ādi*, 173,3

2 इन्द्रध्वज इवोत्सृष्ट केतु सर्व्वधनुष्मताम् ।
धरणीं न स पस्पर्श शरसङ्घैः समावृत ॥

MBh, *Bhīsma*, 119,91

3 तौ परस्परवेगाच्च गदाभ्यां च भृशाहतौ ।
युगपत् पेततुर्वीरौ क्षिताविन्द्रध्वजाविव ॥

MBh, *Drona*, 14,29

4 तावन्योन्यं गदाग्राभ्यामाहत्य पतितौ क्षितौ ।
इन्द्रध्वजाविवोत्सृष्टौ रणमध्ये परन्तप ॥

MBh, *Drona*, 48,11

5 बाहू प्रसार्य्याभिमुखो धर्म्मराजस्य मद्रराट् ।
ततो निपतितो भूमाविन्द्रध्वज इवोच्छ्रित ॥

MBh, *Salya*, 17,52,

ceremony usually performed 5 days after the hoisting Even in Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṃśa* in the description of Raghu as king of Ayodhyā after his father Dilīpa, we have reference to the hoisting of the *Indradhvaja*, which was both adorned and high.[1]

According to Mallinātha, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* says that the kings who make the procession of Indra's flag in a car (*Ratha*) would have their kingdoms favoured by timely rain [2] The further description of how this flag was hoisted and how it was carried in a car through the main streets of the King's capital in ancient India is described in the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* of Varāha-Mihira, chapter 42 "The gods approached Brahmā and said to him 'O Lord, we cannot stand in battle against the Asuras on equal terms Hence we approach you as our only shelter' Brahmā told the gods, 'the Lord Keśava who is now floating in the sea of milk would give you such a flag that on seeing it the demons would not be able to stand in the battlefield before you' Having obtained this boon, the gods with Indra went to the sea of milk and began to praise Viṣṇu The great God thus appeased gave them a flag which would lead them to victory Indra having got this flag was highly delighted' Bhattotpala while commenting on the above quotes from Garga the following passage "The Asuras on seeing that flag were struck by its brilliance, got confounded and of broken ranks, defeated and fled in the month of *Bhādrapada* The thousand-eyed Indra by his thunderbolt killed the Asuras in the night in which the moon was at *Antares*, went to heaven after winning the battle, on the night with the moon, whom he met on the way at the star *Śravaṇā* (*Altair*)"

Varāha adds that the king of the gods, Indra, gave that flag staff which was made of bamboo to Uparicara Vasu, the king of the Cedis, and he worshipped it according to the *Śāstric* rites By this worship, Maghavan was highly pleased and said that the

[1] पुरुहूतध्वजस्येव तस्योन्नयनपङ्क्तय. ।
नवाभ्युत्थानदर्शिन्यो ननन्दु सप्रजा. प्रजा ॥

Raghu, 4,3

[2] एव य: कुरुते यात्रामिन्द्रकेतोर्युधिष्ठिर ।
पर्जन्य कामवर्षी स्यात् तस्य राज्ये न संशय. ॥

kings who thus behave would be as rich as the Vasus, and in the world their commands would always be accomplished Their subjects also being favoured with rich harvest and being free from fear and diseases, would be delighted

The ceremony of the hoisting of Indra's flag was performed in the 12th *tithi* of the light half of the lunar month of *Bhādrapada*, with the moon near *Śravaṇā* (*Altair*), as such was the day on which Indra achieved his victory over the Asuras Hence Garga says —

' There the hoisting of the flag is to be preferred in the 12th *tithi* with the moon near the star *Śravaṇā* (*Altair*) either in the *muhūrta* of the day which is known as *Vijaya* or *Āśva* or in any other part of the day ''

A *muhūrta*=1/30th part of day and night or 24 hours The *muhūrta* which is here called *Vijaya* was perhaps the 8th and *Āśva* the 4th which in the astronomy of the *Atharva Veda* are respectively called *Abhijit* and *Sāvabhaṭa*

The day for the hoisting of Indra's flag is even now shown in Hindu calendars, though the ceremony is now more honoured in the breach than in the observance

Hence the day of hoisting of the *Indradhvaja* is the anniversary of Indra's victory over the *Asuras* or the clouds We take it that this was the day of the summer solstice according to the recorded tradition

Now the day for the ceremony falls on the 12th *tithi*-day of *Bhādra* in the following years in our own times on the dates shown below —

1939 A D	24th Sept.	1929 A D	15th Sept
1938	6th Sept	1928	26th Sept
1937	17th Sept	1927	8th Sept
1936	27th Sept	1926	19th Sept
1935	10th Sept	1924	10th Sept [1]
1934	20th Sept	1923	21st Sept
1932	11th Sept	1922	3rd Sept
1931	22nd Sept	1921	13th Sept.
1930	4th Sept		

[*] S P Dikshit's भारतीय-ज्योतिः शास्त्र, 1st Edn , p 98

[1] In the year 1925, on the day for the ceremony, the twelfth *tithi* did not extend till the moon reached *Śravaṇa*,

Śravaṇā or *Altair*, has now the celestial longitude of about 301° When the 11th *tithi* is just over, the moon must be ahead of the sun by 132° Hence on the day on which the moon would be near Śravaṇā and 11 *tithis* old, the sun should have the longitude of 169° or according to our current signs of the Zodiac, which will be 4^s 26° nearly, the date would be about the 12th September In the above table formed from our calendars the date oscillates between the 3rd and the 27th September, and the mean date becomes the 15th September The true anniversary of India's victory over the Asuras, or of the traditional summer solstice day may then be taken as the 15th September, 1929 This date is not far removed from what we got by a consideration of the longitude of the star *Śravaṇā* and the age of the moon Further, in ancient times a *nakṣatra* meant a star group and not any part of the ecliptic, and a *tithi* meant a day in those days, hence it is quite rational to take the 15th September, 1929, as the date of true anniversary of India's victory which was the day of the summer solstice of the required year

We now proceed with the calculation for determining the required year

If t=no of Julian years, counted from Greenwich mean noon of 1st January, 1900, and L=the mean longitude of the sun, then $L=280°40'56''+1296027''\ 6318\ t$ neglecting the smaller last term

Hence from the above formula the mean longitude of the sun on 15th September, 1929, at Greenwich mean noon comes out to have been 173°58′14″

In the required year this longitude was roughly equal to 90° degrees Hence as a first step the shifting of the solstices becomes 83°58′ Now the mean rate of annual precession during the period between the required date and 1929 A D =49″ 5902 With this rate the time required by the solstices to fall back through 83°58′ becomes 6096 years nearly, which shows as a first approximation that the required date is 6067 years before 1900 A D

Now we are to find out the position of the sun's apogee 60 67 centuries earlier than 1900 A D If ϖ=apogee of the sun's apparent orbit, then

$$\varpi=101°13'15''+6189''\ 03t+1\ 63t^2+0''\ 012t^3,$$

where t=no of Julian centuries from 1900 A D This gives the longitude of the apogee at the required epoch to be 357°51′ Hence the sun's mean anomaly counted from the apogee=92°9′, the sun's mean longitude being taken equal to 90°

Similarly the eccentricity of the sun's orbit at that remote epoch= 01882 and the sun's equation of centre works out to be 2°9′ This equation is to be applied negatively to the mean sun for 15th September, 1929 which yields the true shifting of the solstices to be 81°49′ or 2°9′ less than the value obtained before. This diminishes the number of elapsed years by 159 So the required date is 5937 years earlier than 1929 A D or is 4009 B C which may roughly be taken to be 4000 B C.

This date is the same that obtained before in the chapters IV and V and confirmed in chapter VI, on the Rbhus Hence the Hindu Calendar faithfully records the time when Indra, the rain-giver, began to function with the heliacal rising of *Maghā* or *α Leonis* at Kuruksetra Indra's fight with the Asuras is here the same thing as his killing Vrtra or even Vrtras

• CHAPTER VIII

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Miscellaneous Indications of Vedic Antiquity from the Vedas

In the chapters on "Madhu-Vidyā or the Science of Spring" and "When India became Maghavan" and in other auxiliary chapters, I have established that the culture of the Vedic Hindus date from about 4000 B C, and at that time the Vernal Equinox was near λ *Orionis,* Summer Solstice near the star β *Leonis,* Autumnal Equinox near λ *Scorpionis* and that the W Solstice was near the star α *Pegasi* The two stars α and β *Pegasi* form the group known as the *naksatra Pūrva-Bhādrapada,* and its presiding deity, as is well known, is named *Aja-Ekapāt* which is rendered in English as "one-footed goat" In the *Jyautisa-Vedāngas,* the *naksatra* itself is read *Aja-Ekapāt* In the *Taittirīya Samhitā*[1] we have "प्रोष्ठपदा नक्षत्रमज एकपाद्देवता," *i e*, of the *naksatra Prosthapadā,* the deity is *Aja-Ekapāt* The *Taittirīya Brāhmana*[2] has also the statement "of the one-footed goat (*Ajasya Ekapadah*) the *naksatra* is *Prosthapadas* Now the tradition spoken of above that there was a time in ancient Vedic Hindu culture, when the winter solstitial colure passed through the star α *Pegasi* or the *naksatra Pūrva-Bhādrapada,* is preserved in the *Atharva Veda,* XIII, 1,6 and also in *T Brāhmana* according to Whitney and which runs as follows —

रोहितो द्यावापृथिवी जजान तत्र तन्तुं परमेष्ठी ततान ।
तत्र शिश्रियेऽज एकपादोऽदृंहद् द्यावापृथिवी बलेन ॥६॥

Whitney translates this verse thus —

"The ruddy one generated heaven-and-earth, there the most exalted (*Paramesthin*) stretched the line (*tantu*), there was

[1] *T Samhitā,* IV, 4, 10
[2] *T Brāhmana,* I, 5, 1

supported the one-footed goat (*Aja-Ekapāda*), by strength he made firm heaven-and-earth."

Whitney's rendering is very accurate and he adds the following note —

"Ppp reads in **c** *ekapādyo* The verse occurs in *T B.* (ii 5 23),[1] with only slight variants *tasmin* for *tatra* in **b** and **c**, and *ekapāt* in **c**"

The above has clearly an astronomical interpretation which did not dawn upon the translator Here the word *Aja-Ekapāt*, clearly means the *nakṣatra Pūrva-Bhādrapada* of which the chief star (junction star) is α *Pegasi*, and the word *tantu*=line, the winter solstitial colure *Rohita*=ruddy one, undoubtedly means the ruddy sun as understood by Whitney

The interpretation is, that it was the sun who separated the heaven from the earth, or part of the heavens in which the sun moved, *viz*, the part of the sphere lying between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn which is expressed by the word *Dyam* in this verse The line of the winter solstice was drawn through α *Pegasi* by some person of forgotten memory who is traditionally called here *Paramesthin* or *Brahmā* In the chapter on Rbhus I have shown that it was they who separated the heaven from the earth and who 'mentally' constructed the 'car of the Aśvins' and the 'horses of Indra' Here the word *Paramesthin* stands for the Rbhus of forgotten memory The method by which this line as spoken of above was drawn, was perhaps this that the day of *Viṣuvān* or the summer solstice day of one year was a full-moon day and the full moon was observed as conjoined with the star α *Pegasi* by a simultaneous meridian crossing of the moon and the star Thus the winter solstitial colure was inferred to be passing straight through the star α *Pegasi*

We quote the next three verses of the *Atharva Veda* in support of our interpretation Whitney translates them thus —

"7 The ruddy one made firm heaven-and-earth, by him was established the sky (*svar*), by him the firmament (*nāka*), by

[1] रोहितो द्यावापृथिवी जजान। तस्मिंस्तन्तुं परमेष्ठी ततान। तत्र शिश्रिये ऽज एकपादः। अदृंहद् द्यावापृथिवी बलेन। as in the T Brāhmana

him the atmosphere, the spaces (*rajas*) were measured out, by him the gods discovered immortality."[1]

"8 The ruddy one examined (*vi mṛś*) the all formed, collecting to himself the *fore-ascents* (*praruha*) and the ascents (*ruha*), having ascended the sky with great greatness, let him anoint thy kingdom with milk, with ghee."[2]

"9 What ascents (*ruha*) fore-ascents (*praruha*) thou hast, what on-ascents (*āruha*) thou hast with which thou fillest the sky, the atmosphere, with the *brahman*, with the milk of them increasing, do thou watch over the people in the kingdom of the ruddy one."[3]

In the first of these three verses, the heavens are divided into (1) *svar*, (2) *nāka*, and perhaps also into (3) the atmosphere, and by the sun, it is stated that the spaces were measured out. Here by the word *svar* is meant the part of the celestial sphere between the two tropics and the remaining portion was named *nāka*.

In the second verse we have the words *ruha* and *praruha* which must mean respectively the northern and southern limits of the sun's ascent as estimated on the meridian. All these considerations lead us to think that the "line of Brahmā" of the *Atharva Veda* and the *Taittirīya Brāhmana* was undoubtedly the winter solstitial colure passing through the star α *Pegasi*. Hence our finding the date of the earliest Vedic culture as 4000 B.C. finds a most unexpected corroboration from the tradition recorded in the above-mentioned Vedic literature. It shows clearly that the earliest of the Vedic Hindus, the Ṛbhus, were interested principally in the determination of the solstitial colures and not much so in finding the equinoxial colures. The mention of *Rohiṇī* as the first star in the Mahābhārata and the mention

[1] रोहितो द्यावापृथिवी अदृंहत्तेन स्वस्तभितं तेन नाकः ।
तेनान्तरिक्षं विमिता रजांसि तेन देवा अमृतमन्वविन्दन् ॥७॥

[2] वि रोहितो अमृशद्विश्वरूपं समाकुर्वाणः प्ररुहो रुहश्च ।
दिवं रूढ्वा महता महिम्ना सं ते राष्ट्रमनक्तु पयसा घृतेन ॥८॥

[3] यास्ते रुहः प्ररुहो यास्त आरुहो याभिरापृणासि दिवमन्तरिक्षम् ।
तासां ब्रह्मणा पयसा वावृधानो विशि राष्ट्रे जागृहि रोहितस्य ॥९॥

of the two *Rohiṇīs* in the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, with a difference of exactly 180° of longitude, suggests that the determination of the vernal equinox by the ancient (Vedic) Hindus could not have happened before 3050 B C The Mahābhārata again speaks of the full moons at the *Kṛttikās* and the *Maghās*, and as these stars *Kṛttikā* (η *Tauri*) and *Maghā* (α *Leonis*) differ in longitude by almost exactly 90° degrees, the above statement points accurately to the positions respectively of the V Equinox and the summer solstice of the date 2350 B C although perhaps determined about 2449 B C, the date of the Bhārata battle which was also the date of the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, as it speaks of the *Kṛttikās* as the first *nakṣatra*

I tried to interpret the *Atharva* reference quoted above in terms of the heliacal rising of α *Pegasi* with the sun at vernal equinox, conjoined with *Rohiṇī*, but this interpretation was found impossible astronomically.

In the Chapter on " Madhu-Vidyā or the Science of Spring," I have demonstrated that the Science of Spring was the knowledge that spring set in near about Kurukṣetra with the heliacal rising of the *Aśvinī* group of stars, *viz*, the stars α, β and γ *Arietis* The date from this condition, I have shown, comes out to be 4000 B C

The further confirmation of this finding of mine has also been found from the *Rg-Veda* itself In M I 85, the verses 13-15 run as follows[1] —

' Indra, with the bones of Dadhyañc, slew ninety times nine Vṛtras "

" Wishing for the horse's head hidden in the mountains, he found it at Saryanāvat "

' The (solar rays) found on this occasion the light of Tvaṣṭṛ verily concealed in the mansion of the moving moon " .

(Wilson)

[1] इन्द्रो दधीचोऽस्थभिर्वृत्राण्यप्रतिष्कुतः । जघान नवतीर्नव ॥१३॥
इच्छन्नश्वस्य यच्छिरः पर्वतेष्वपश्रितम् । तद्विदच्छर्यणावति ॥१४॥
अत्राह गोरमन्वत नाम त्वष्टुरपीच्यम् । इत्था चन्द्रमसो गृहे ॥१५॥[1]

I am idebted to Mrs A S D Maunder, F R A S for drawing my attention to these verses

In Wilson's translation, the last verse should begin with "He" in place of "The (solar rays)". The first verse says that Indra slew his enemies called Vrtras (i e, Clouds), with the thunderbolt made of the bone of the fictitious person Dadhyañc as the tradition from the Purāṇas says. In the second verse Indra discovered that spring had just begun with the heliacal rising of the horse's head or Aśvinī cluster when he observed it from the lake Saryanāvat which was near Kuruksetra according to the commentator. In the third verse the occasion or the time of observation was when Tvaṣṭi (=the sun) was found (or rather inferred to be) at the expected place of the moon or the night in question was of a new-moon. It must be admitted that a new-moon night is the best for observing the heliacal rising of a star or star group. It is almost needless to repeat that I used the same data for arriving at the date 4000 B C in the chapter on *Madhu-Vidyā*.

In another place of the *Rg-Veda*, Indra is called *mesa* (the ram)—M I 51,1 runs thus[1] —

"Animate with praise that Ram, Indra, who is adored by many, who is gratified by hymns and is an ocean of wealth."

Wilson

In explaining why Indra is called a ram (*mesa*), Wilson refers to a legend, in which it is narrated, that Indra came in the form of ram to the sacrifice solemnized by Medhātithi and drank the *Soma* juice.

Now the sacrificial year began with spring generally, hence Indra's coming to the sacrifice began by Medhātithi must mean the heliacal rising of *Aries* (rather the *Aśvinī* cluster at the head of the Ram) at the beginning of spring. This is therefore easily interpreted by the *Madhu-Vidyā*, and Medhātithi must be a very ancient risi, much anterior to Vāmadeva who flourished about 2760 B C as determined in a previous chapter.

It must be admitted that in the *Rg-Veda* we have the mention of the constellations *Mesa* (Aries) and *Vrsabha* (Bull),[2]

[1] अभित्य मेष पुरुहूतमृग्मियमिन्द्र गीर्भिर्मदता वस्वोऽर्णव।

[2] *Rg-Veda*, M I 116,18

which were quite forgotten or disused in the later Vedic times and also in the Vedāngas I have not got the names of the other signs of Zodiac in the *Rg-Veda*, perhaps they were not all formed in those days I have already pointed out the dropping of some other old constellations in the later Vedic literature, the *Vedāngas* and the *Mahābhārata*

It is perhaps unmistakably established that the earliest date for the Vedic Hindu culture must be about 4000 B C

CHAPTER IX

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

The Solar Eclipse in the Rgveda and the date of Atri

In the present chapter we propose to find the time of the solar eclipse described in the *Rg-Veda*, the time which was undoubtedly that of the *rsi* Atri who was the author of the hymn V, 40, 5-9 The first attempt at finding the date of this event was made by Ludwig [1] in May, 1885, with the assistance of the Viennese astronomer Oppolzer Ludwig imagined that there were references to four eclipses of the sun in the *Rg-Veda*, *viz* , V, 40, 5-9, V, 33, 4 , X 138, 3a and X, 138, 4 I have examined all these references and my view is that only the first reference describes a real eclipse of the sun, the other three relate to the summer solstice day and the appearance of the clouds Ludwig's paper was severely criticised by Whitney in 1885 under the caption " On Professor Ludwig's views respecting total eclipses of the sun as noticed in the *Ṛg-Veda*," in the JAOS XIII, pp lxi-lxvi, for October of the same year Whitney ends his discussion by making the following remark

"There are many other versions and statements and inferences in Prof Ludwig's paper to which serious exception might be taken , but it was best to limit the discussion to the main point had in view—namely to show that no result possessing even presumptive and provisional value as bearing on ancient Hindu chronology has been reached by his investigation "

We shall show that Prof. Ludwig's interpretation of the Ṛgveda reference was not correct as this present chapter is developed. Prof C R Lanman in the year 1893 wrote a paper

[1] Paper published in *Sitzung berichte* of the Bohemian Academy of Science in 1885

on *Rgveda* V, 40 and its Buddhist parallel in Festscrift Roth 187 Eclipse du Soliel par *Svarbhānu,* parallel *Samyukta Nikāya,* II, 1, 10, cited in Louis Renou's *Bibliographie Vedique*

We can only say that such similarity of statements as to solar eclipses in the two works cannot establish that the Atri tradition was contemporary with the *Samyukta Nikāya* event To settle chronology by a reference to a solar eclipse is a very difficult matter, no easy-going researches can be of any value. Without making further attempt at tracing all the different attempts made before by other researchers, we proceed to interpret the *Rgveda* reference V, 40, 5-9 The original Sanskrit *rca's* are —

यत्त्वा सूर्य्यं स्वर्भानुस्तमसाविध्यादासुरः। अक्षेत्रविद्द यथा मुग्धो भुवनान्यदीधयुः ॥५॥ स्वर्भानोरधयदिन्द्रमायाऽअवोदिवो वर्तमानाऽअवाहन्। गूह्ळं सूर्य्यं तमसापव्रतेन तुरीयेण ब्रह्मणा विन्ददत्रिः ॥६॥ मामामिम तवसन्तमत्रऽइरस्याद्रुग्धोभियसानिगारीत्। त्वं मित्रोऽअसि सत्यराधास्तौमेहावतं वरुणश्च राजा ॥७॥ ग्राव्णोब्रह्मायुयुजानः सपर्य्यंन् कीरिणा देवान्नमसोपशिक्षण्। अत्रि सूर्य्यस्य दिवि चक्षुराधात् स्वर्भानोरपमायाऽअधुक्षत् ॥८॥ यं वै सूर्य्यं स्वर्भानुस्तमसाविध्यदासुरः। अत्रयस्तमन्वविन्दन् नह्यन्येऽअशक्नुवन् ॥९॥

Wilson's translation runs as follows —

"5 When O Sūrya, the son of *asura, Svarbhānu,* overspread (rather 'struck') thee with darkness, the worlds were beheld like one bewildered not knowing his place"

The second line perhaps is more correctly translated as, "the worlds shone lustreless like a confounded tactless person"

"6 When, Indra, thou wast dissipating those illusions of *Svarbhānu* which were spread below the sun, then Atri, by his **fourth sacred prayer** (*turīyena brahmanā*), discovered (rather 'rescued') the sun concealed by the darkness impeding his functions"

Whitney explains that *Svarbhānu* means simply "sky-light" Whatever that may be, what interests us here is the phrase "*turīyena brahmanā*" "by the fourth sacred prayer", as translated by Wilson after Sāyana. Some say that this means a

quadrant or the fourth part of a graduated circle, which we cannot take to be correct The use of the graduated circle, or its fourth part in Vedic times was an impossibility, we could admit the validity of the interpretation if the event belonged to Brahmagupta's time (628 A D) Further it is a barren meaning throwing no light on any circumstance of the eclipse As Wilson following Sāyana translates the phrase as " by the fourth sacred prayer," we may take this to be the only correct interpretation As the fourth prayer of the day, most likely belonged to the fourth part of the day, we interpret **that the eclipse in question was finished in the fourth part of the day**

Again the phrase '*turīyena brahmanā*' may also be interpreted in a different way The word '*brahman*' itself may mean the summer solstice day In the *Śānkhāyana Āranyaka* (Keith's translation), the *Mahāvrata* day is spoken of as " This day is '*Brahman*' (I, 2) and again the same day is thus referred to, " *Brahman* is this day" (I, 18) In the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana*, II, 409-10, we have मध्यतः संवत्सरस्य विषुवति महाव्रतम् उपयन्ति, which means that the *mahāvrata* ceremony used to be performed on the *Visuvant* or the summer solstice day. We thus understand that "*turīyena brahmanā*" means "by the fourth part of the summer solstice day" In other words, the eclipse in question was over in the fourth part of the summer solstice day itself (Here "*turīyena brahmanā = turīyena kālena brahmadivasena*" "*Brahman*" thus means the longest day of year, which seems quite natural)

"7. [Sūrya speaks], Let not the violater, Atri, through hunger, swallow with fearful (darkness) me who am thine, thou art Mitra whose wealth is truth do thou and the royal Varuna both protect me"

This verse seems to suggest that the eclipse in question although apprehended to be total was not so at the place of the observer Atri is here spoken of as having saved the sun from total disappearance The verse is perhaps an example of "wisdom or power after the event"

"8 Then the Brāhmana (Atri), applying the stones together, propitiating the gods with praise, and adoring them with

reverence, placed the eye of *Sūrya* (sun) in the sky, he dissipated the delusions of *Svarbhānu* "

Here Atri is alleged to have found out the instant of the end of eclipse by counting stones together—a practice which was continued even up to the time of Pṛthūdaka (864 A D)[1] Atri's placing the eye of *Sūrya* in the sky shows that the end of the eclipse was visible or the eclpse finished before sunset

"9 The sun, whom the *asura* Svarbhānu enveloped (rather 'struck') with darkness, the sons of Atri subsequently recovered, no others were able (to effect his release) "

As to the day of the year on which this eclipse took place, the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*, (xxiv, 3, 4) throws clearer light —

स्वर्भानुर्हासुरादित्य तमसाविध्यत्तस्यात्रयस्तमोपजिघांसन्त एत सप्तदशस्तोमं त्र्यहं पुरस्ताद्विषुवत उपायस्तस्य पुरस्तात्तमोपजघ्नुस्तत् परस्तादशोददेतमेव त्र्यहमुपरिष्टाद्विषुवत उपायस्तस्य परस्तात् तमोपजघ्नुस्तद्य एवं विद्वांस एत सप्तदशस्तोमं त्र्यहमुभयतो विषुवन्तमुपायन्त्युभाभ्यामेव ते लोकाभ्या यजमाना' पाप्मानपघ्नते तान्वै स्वरसामान इत्याचक्षते एतैर्हवा अत्रय आदित्य तमसोपस्पृण्वत तद्यदपस्पृण्वत तस्मात् स्वरसामान स्तदेतदृचाऽभ्युदितम् ।

यं वै सूर्य्यं स्वर्भानुस्तमसाविध्यदासुर' ।
अत्रयस्तमन्वविन्दन्नह्यन्ये अशक्नुवन् ॥ इति

Keith translates the passage as follows —

"Svarbhānu, an Asura, pierced with darkness the sun, the Atris were fain to smite away its darkness, they performed, before the *Visuvant*, this set of three days, with *saptadaśa* (seventeen) *stoma* They smote away the darkness in front of it, that settled behind, they performed the same three day rite after the *Visuvant*, they smote away the darkness behind it Those who perform knowing thus, this three-day (rite) with the *Saptadaśa stoma* on both sides of the *Visuvant*, verily those sacrificers smite away evil from both worlds They call them the *Svarasāmans*, by them the Atris rescued (*apasprnvata*) the sun from the darkness. in that they rescued, therefore, are the *Svarasāmans*, This is declared in a *rc*

[1] *Cf* Calcutta University Publication of the *Khandakhādyaka*, with Pṛthūdaka's Commentary, page 16

"The sun which Svaibhānu
The Asura pierced with darkness,
The Atris found it,
None other could do so"

We gather from this passage that the day on which the eclipse happened was the *Visuvant* day. Now the word '*Visuvant*' according to the *Aitareya* and the *Kausītaki Brāhmanas*, meant the summer solstice day, as I have set forth elsewhere The arguments may be summarised thus —

According to the *Aitareya Brāhmana*, the *Visuvant* and the *Ekavimśa* day was the same day, the day on which the gods raised up the sun to the *highest point* in the heavens, and that on this day the sun being held on either side by a period of 10 days (*Virāj*) did not *waver* though he went over these worlds Or that the *Visuvant* was the true summer solstice day The *Kausītaki Brāhmana* also says that the sun starting northward from the winter solstice on the new moon day of Māgha, reached the *Visuvant* after six months Thus according these two *Rg-Veda Brāhmanas* the *Visuvant* day meant the s s day only

In the days of the *Taittirīya Samhitā* 2446 B C and the *Tāndya Brāhmana* (about 1700 B C), the word *Visuvant* came to mean the middle day of the sacrificial year begun from spring, or it became the day when the sun's longitude became 150°, *i e*, the beginning of the Indian autumn Finally the same word came to mean about the time (1400 B C) of the *Vedāngas*,[1] the vernal or the autumnal equinox day The question to settle is which of these three meanings should we accept for the correct interpretation of this *Rgvedic* reference Hence in interpreting a *Rgveda* reference, we should take the word *Visuvant* as the summer solstice day only, as this is the meaning of it given by the *Rgveda Brāhmanas* Another point that needs be clarified is to get at the rough time of Atri and the place of his observation of this eclipse We shall use the Rgveda references alone

As to Atri, there are many references in the *Rgveda*

I, 51, 3, I, 112, 7, I, 116, 8, I, 119, 6, I, 139, 9, I, 180, 4; I, 183, 5, V, 73, 6-7, VII, 68, 5, VII, 71, 5,

[1] *Yajusa Jyautisam*, 23

VIII, 35, 19, VIII, 36, 7, VIII, 37, 7, VIII, 42, 5, VII, 62, 3-8, X, 39, 9, X, 143, 1-3, X, 150, 5.

Some of them are cited below as evidence to show where and when Atri lived

(*a*) I, 51, 3 addressed to Indra—

"Thou hast shown the way to Atri, who vexes his adversaries by a hundred doors "[1]

(*b*) I, 112, 7 addressed to the Aśvins—

"You rendered the scorching heat pleasurable to Atri "[2]

(*c*) I, 119, 6 addressed to the Aśvins—

"You quenched with *snow* (*himena*) for Atri, the scorching heat "[3]

(*d*) I, 116, 8, addressed to the Aśvins—

"You quenched with *cold* (*himena*), the blazing flames (that encompassed Atri), and supplied him with food-supported strength, you extricated him, Aśvins, from the dark *cavern* into which he had been thrown headlong, and restored him to every kind of welfare "[4]

(*e*) I, 139, 9, addressed by Parucchepa to Agni, showing the high antiquity in which Atri lived —

"The ancient Dadhyañc, Angiras, Priyamedha, Kaṇva, Atri and Manu have known my birth "[5]

(*f*) I, 181, 4 to the Aśvins—

"You rendered the heat as soothing as sweet butter to Atri "[6]

(*g*) V, 73, 6-7 to the Aśvins —

"Leaders (of rites), Atri recognized your benevolence with a grateful mind on account of the relief you afforded him, when,

1 अपोतात्रये शतदुरेषु गातुवित ।

2 तप्त घर्ममोम्यावन्तमत्रये ।

3 हिमेन घर्मं परितप्तमत्रये ।

4 हिमेनाग्निं घ्रंसमवारयेथां पितुमतीमूर्जमस्मा अधत्तं ।
ऋबीसे अत्रिमश्विनावनीतमुन्निन्यथुः सर्वगणं स्वस्ति ॥

5 दध्यङ् ह मे जनुषं पूर्वो अङ्गिराः प्रियमेधः कण्वो अत्रिर्मनुर्विदुस्ते मे पूर्वे मनुर्विदुः ॥

6 युवं ह घर्मं मधुमन्तमत्रयेऽपो न क्षोदोऽवृणीतमेषे ।

Nāsatyas, through his praise of you, he found the fiery heat innocuous" "Atri was rescued by your acts."[1]

From these quotations it would appear that Atri took shelter in a cave with a hundred doors or openings, where he felt scorching heat, which was allayed by a thaw of ice from the snow-capped top of the mountain peak, at the bottom of which this cave was situated From the quotation (*e*), we gather that Atri was a contemporary of Dadhyañc, Angiras Priyamedha, Kanva and Manu, was probably one of the first batch of Aryans to pour into the Punjab The favour of the Aśvins which Atri is alleged to have received was at the time perhaps of the rising of *α Arietis* in the east at the end of evening twilight For this astronomical event at about 4000 B C at the latitude of Kuruksetra, the Sun's longitude comes out to have been 97° 54′ which was correct to about 8 days after the summer solstice—the time or part of the year which was quite favourable for the thaw of the Himalayan ice

We may then conclude that Atri lived about the time 4000 B C, in a cave of hundred openings at the bottom of a snow-capped peak either of the Himalayas or of the Karakoram range Hence the eclipse of the sun spoken of in the hymn attributed to Atri, happened on the *Visuvant* or the summer solstice day either correctly ascertained or estimated, in the fourth part of the day of the meridian of Kuruksetra

1 Now the *Visuvant* day as correctly ascertained would be the true summer solstice day, as we have reasons to believe that its ascertainment was possible for the Vedic people Next if we suppose that as the Vedic year was of 366 days, the S S day was estimated from an observational determination of it one year before, the estimated S S day would tend to fall on the day following the true S S day Hence we have to understand that by the word *Visuvant, we are to understand either the true S*

[1] युवोरत्रिश्चिकेतति नरा सुम्नेन चेतसा ।
घर्मं यद्वामरेपसं नासत्यास्ना भुरण्यति ॥
* * * *
यद्वां दंसोभिरश्विनात्रिर्नराववर्तति ॥

Solstice day or the day following it, if we suppose that both the winter and summer solstice days were truly determined by the Vedic calendar makers of those times

2 Then again if we suppose that the W Solstice day was correctly ascertained by observation as a new-moon day of *Māgha*, and the summer solstice day was always estimated, the so-called S S day of those times would have many variants The *Kausītaki Brāhmana*, the *Aitareya Brāhmana* and the *Vedāngas* take the sun's northerly and southerly courses to be of equal durations This is possible only when the sun's apogee has the longitude of 90° or 270° In the actual case the variation is shown below —

Year	Half year from W Solstice to S Solstice	Half year from S Solstice to W Solstice
—4000 A D	187 days	178 24 days
—3000 A D	186 75 ,,	178 49 ,,
—2000 A D	186 10 ,,	179 14 ,,
—1000 A D	185 20 ,,	180 04 ,,

The following interpretations may consequently be put on the *Visuvant* day of Vedic literature —

(*a*) If the eclipse happened about 4000 B C, on the estimated S. Solstice day from an accurate determination of the W Solstice day on a *Māgha*-new-moon day, in 2½ years (tropical) the number of days would correctly be=917 or even 918 days whereas according to the Vedic calendars the same period would comprise 915 days only Hence *the estimated S Solstice day would be 2 or 3 days before the true date*

(*b*) If about 4000 B C, the eclipse happened on the estimated S Solstice day, under the same system of reckoning for 7½ years (tropical), the number of days in this period=2744 days correct and in the Vedic calendar there would be 2745 days instead Hence *the estimated S Solstice day would be the day following the true S Solstice day*

Hence in looking for the solar eclipse on the *Visuvant* day as interpreted in 1 and 2 (*b*) above, we must take it to mean either the true summer solstice day or the day following it

In the case 2(*a*) we shall have to look for the eclipse 2 or 3 days before the true S Solstice day, in this case we would be content on pointing out the suitable eclipse or eclipses The detailed study will be made in the other case only

We begin with former cases which are the more important for many reasons set forth before

Hence the solar eclipse we want to find the date of, must satisfy the following conditions —

(1) It must have happened on the summer solstice day or on the day following and no other date is admissible

(2) It must have been a central solar eclipse.

(3) It must have happened or rather ended in the fourth part of the day for the meridian of Kuruksetra

(4) It must have been observed from a cave at the foot of a snow capped peak either of the Himālayas or of the Karakoram Range

(5) That at the place of Atri, the eclipse did not reach the totality

(6) It must have happened between 4000 to 2400 B C, neither earlier nor later, when the word *Visuvant* had its oldest meaning, *viz.*, the summer solstice day

We now proceed to determine the central solar eclipse which must satisfy all the conditions enumerated above We get at a central solar eclipse happening on the 21st July, 3146 B C.

The *Kausītaki Brāhmana* says that the sun turned north on the new moon of *Māgha* This *Māgha* is not an ordinary month of *Māgha* as it comes every year, but it was the Vedic standard month of *Māgha* which came in our times in the years 1924, 1927, 1932 and 1935, as has been shown in another place I tried the months of *Māgha* of the years 1924, 1932, and 1935, but these did not lead to a central solar eclipse The Vedic month of *Māgha* as it came in the year 1927 B C, however, did yield the central solar eclipse on the 21st July, 3146 B.C.,

on the day following the summer solstice day in the following way —

In the year 1927 A D , the Vedic standard month of *Māgha* lasted from February, 2 to March, 3, half the Vedic lustrum or full 31 lunations after this date came the 3rd of September, 1929 A D , on which day the new moon happened at about G M noon

Now on the 3rd September, 1929, G M N , the sun's mean longitude from Newcomb's equation comes out to have been $=162° 8' 33''$ Ignoring the sun's equation I assumed as a first step that this longitude was $=90°$ at the year we want to determine This shows a total shifting of the solstices by $72° 8' 33''$, representing a lapse of 5227 years till 1929 A D From which we get that the longitude of the sun's apogee was $12° 36' 48''$ at 51 98 centuries before 1900 A D The eccentricity of the sun's orbit was = 01858 nearly Hence the sun's equation for the mean longitude of 90° was $=-2° 5' 9''$ nearly. This equation is applied to the mean longitude of the sun at G M N on the 3rd September, 1929, *viz* , to $162° 8' 32''$ The result $160° 3'$ for 1929 A D was $=90°$ in the year we want to determine This gives a total shifting of the solstice up to 1929 A D to be $=70° 3'$ nearly, indicating a lapse of 5074 years Now since $5074=1939 \times 2+160 \times 7+19 \times 4$, and as 1939, 160 and 19 years are lunisolar cycles, it may be inferred that the number of elapsed years till 1929 A D does not require any change to make the year arrived at similar to 1929 A D

Now 5074 sidereal years = 1853311 days
= 5074 Julian years + 32 5 days

Hence the Julian date arrived at
= −3145 A D July, 20
or = 3146 B C July, 20

Now on July, 20 3146 B C , G.M N (1)	and on July, 21, 3146 B C , G M N (2)
Mean Sun $=91° 51' 48''$ 42	Mean Sun $=92° 50' 56''$ 75
Mean Moon $=80° 1' 41''$ 45	Mean Moon $=93° 12' 16''$ 45
Moon's Node $=270° 21' 25''$ 00	Moon's D Node $=90° 18' 14''$ 37
Moon's Perigee $=250° 39' 1''$ 02	Moon's Perigee $=250° 45' 42''$ 07

The sun and the moon's elements have been calculated back from the equations given by Newcomb and Brown, respectively, which have been taken as correct from 4500 B C up to the modern times.

The figures in column (2) show that on the 21st July, 3146 B C, there was an annular eclipse of the sun, but this was not visible from the northern Punjab, and cannot be accepted as giving us Atri's time This eclipse took place (1) on the day following the summer solstice, (2) in the 4th part of the day on the meridian of Kuruksetra We take this eclipse as the starting point for further calculations We find that —

The mean tropical year at 3146 B C = 365 2425084 days

The mean synodic month 3146 B C = 29 5305988 days

The mean motion of the moon's node at this epoch = 69636″ 6596 per tropical year

The tropical revolution of the node for the same epoch = 18 61127 tropical years

The tropical revolution of the moon's perigee at the epoch = 8 84527 tropical years

In our calculations both backward and forward from this epoch, we cannot use the Chaldean saros as it does not contain an exact number of tropical years We have to proceed as follows —

We want to find only those central eclipses of the sun which happened on the same day (*viz*, the summer solstice) of the tropical year

Now,

(a) $\dfrac{\text{Tropical year}}{\text{Synodic month}} = 12 + \dfrac{1}{2+}\,\dfrac{1}{1+}\,\dfrac{1}{2+}\,\dfrac{1}{1+}\,\dfrac{1}{1+}\,\dfrac{1}{18+}$

The convergents are $\dfrac{12}{1}, \dfrac{25}{2}, \dfrac{37}{3}, \dfrac{99}{8}, \dfrac{136}{11}, \dfrac{235}{19}, \dfrac{4366}{353}$

The important luni-solar cycles in tropical years are 8 11, 19, and 353, the lunations in them being 99, 136, 235 and 4366, respectively

(*b*) The convergents to tropical semi-revolutions of the node in tropical years

$$= \frac{9}{1}, \frac{28}{3}, \frac{93}{10}, \frac{121}{13}, \frac{335}{36}$$

Now from these last set of convergents we get,

456 years $= (335 + 121)$

$= (353 + 19 \times 5 + 8)$ years

(1) 456 years $= 4\frac{1}{2}$ revols of Node

$= 5640$ lunations very nearly

Again 456 years $= 166551$ days

and 5640 lunations $= 166552\ 6$ days

(2) 391 years $= (335 + 2 \times 28)$ years

$= (36 + 6)$ nodal half revolutions

$= 21$ nodal revols

$= (353 + 19 \times 2)$ years

Again 391 years $= 142810$ days

and 4836 lunations $= 142810$ days

(3) 763 years $= (335 \times 2 + 930)$ years $= 41$ revols of Node

$= (353 \times 2 + 19 \times 3)$ years $= 9437$ lunations nearly

Again 763 years $= 278680$ days and 9437 lunations $= 278680$ days

From these we readily get the new set of cycles —

$$372 \text{ tropical years} \begin{cases} = 4601 \text{ lunations} \\ = 20 \text{ revol } -4^\circ 01' \text{ of motion of the Node} \\ = 42 \text{ revol } +20^\circ \text{ of motion of Perigee} \end{cases}$$

$$391 \text{ tropical years} \begin{cases} = 4836 \text{ lunations} \\ = 21 \text{ revol } +3^\circ 10' \text{ of motion of Node} \\ = 44 \text{ revol } +73^\circ 32' \text{ of motion of Perigee} \end{cases}$$

	=235 lunations
19 tropical years	=1 revol +7°31′ motion of the Node
	=2 revol +53°22′ motion of the Perigee
	=9437 lunations
763 tropical years	=41 revol −1°11 motion of the Node
	=86 revol +93°32′ motion of the Perigee
Again	
	=5640 lunations −1·6 days
456 tropical years	=24½ revol +28′ motion of the Node
	=51 revol +199° motion of the Perigee
	=804 lunations −1·6 days
65 tropical years	=3½ revols. −2°39′ motion of the Node
	=7 revols +125°30′ motion of the Perigee
	=1039 lunations −1·6 days
84 tropical years	=4½ revols +4°50′ motion of the Node
	=9 revols +178°44′ motion of the Perigee

With the help of these cycles as a first step, I could find 19 central eclipses of the sun near the summer solstice days extending from 4319 B C to 2234 B. C I could then gather from them 10 central eclipses of the sun happening either on the solstice day or on the day following as exhibited in Table I, all of which happened near the descending node, and I then worked out 12 central solar eclipses near the ascending node which also happened near the summer solstice day Of all these 22 central eclipses, the eclipse which occurred on July, 26, 3928 B C alone meets all the conditions set forth before It is worthy of note in this connection that one of the essential conditions for a central solar eclipse to be visible in the northern Punjab is that the ascending node should have a longitude of about 85° degrees and the descending node the longitude of about 95° degrees, when the eclipse is to happen very near about the summer solstice day. This test applied to other possible central

solar eclipses that may be found in the period under consideration, will readily show them as unsuitable My assistant Mr Lahiri has also come to the same conclusion that no other date save that of 26th July, 3928 B C meets all the necessary conditions under which the solar eclipse described in the Rgveda happened It is thus found from all the possible methods which we can think of, that the above represents a unique solution of the *Rg-vedic* reference and no other date for it except July 26, of 3928 B C can be true within the range 4300 B C to 2400 B.C The circumstances of the eclipse for the meridian of Kuruksetra and for the latitude of 33½° and 35½° north respectively have been calculated by my collaborator Mr Nirmalchandra Lahiri, M A under my supervision Mr Lahiri has, I trust, done this part of the work correctly on methods which had my approval The results are summarised below, while the entire work is exhibited in the appendix II

Solar eclipse, July 26, 3928 B C

(*a*) For the meridian of Kuruksetra and north lat 33½°

		K M Time
Beginning of eclipse	.	3 hrs 17 mins P M
Time of the nearest approach of the centres		4 ,, 19 ,, ,,
End of the eclipse		5 ,, 19 , ,
Mag of the eclipse	=	735 ,,
Instant of New Moon	=	2 hrs 58 mins ,,
Sun's Long	=	90° 16′

(*b*) For the meridian of Kuruksetra and north lat 35½°

	K. M Time
Beginning of eclipse	3 hrs 13 mins. ,,
Nearest approach of centres	4 ,, 18 ,, ,,
Ending of eclipse	5 ,, 17 ,, ,
Magnitude of eclipse = 702	

The eclipse thus takes place on the summer solstice day, after 3 P M and lasts for about two hours and finishes in the last quarter of the day. The eclipse ends at the above two stations sometime

before sunset Although it is a total eclipse of the sun, at the place of the observer the totality although apprehended was not reached by it From this "disaster" the sun was "saved" by Atri, as the *Rg-veda* text says

As to Prof Ludwig's paper, I have not had access to it yet, but from what I could gather of it from Whitney's criticism in JAOS, 1885, he interpreted the word *Visuvant* as an equinoctial day, which is here unjustifiable, since the *Kausītaki* and the *Aitareya Brāhmanas* do not take it in that sense, as I have shown in the chapter on "The solstice days in Vedic literature" These Brāhmanas really take the word to mean the summer solstice day and nothing else Hence as Ludwig was wrong in his iterpretation, Oppolzer who began his calculation of the eclipses from 1200 B C. downwards, thought that either of the dates 1001 B C. Oct 2, and 1029 B C Oct 11, would meet the *Rgvedic* conditions Oppolzer's calculation may be summarised as —

(a) Oct. 2, 1001 B C—The eclipse was annular Time of New Moon of the eclipse as given by Oppolzer is 4 hrs 44 8 mins and the longitude of the Sun was 179°·592 Hence according to Oppolzer's calculation the day was of autumnal equinox.

(b) On Oct 11, 1029 B C was an ordinary solar eclipse. Time of N M of the eclipse given by Oppolzer was 23 hrs 44 9 mins, and the longitude of the Sun was 189° 28 This eclipse accordingly was not completely visible in India and it did not happen even on the autumnal equinox day He based his finding on a wrong interpretation of the word *Viṣuvant* as given by Ludwig, and it is thus quite untenable

Oppolzer again for his calculations had to depend on Leverrier's equations for the sun's elements and Hansen's equations for those of the Moon But now these equations have been supplanted by those of Newcomb and Brown On Oct 2, 1001 B C. at G M Noon, the elements of the sun and moon as deduced from the latest equations are —

Mean Sun = 181° 31′ 6″ 65	New Moon about 5 hrs before
Mean Moon = 177° 37′ 41″ 19	or at 7 hrs G M.T. or 12 hrs.
A. Node = 175° 44′ 34″ 30	8 mins A. M Kuruksetra Mean
Lunar Perigee = 76° 15′ 35″ 68	time.

It seems that the beginning, the middle and the end of the eclipse cannot be correctly obtained from Hansen's equations In the present case our finding of the N M and that of Oppolzer are different

As has been said before, Lanman has pointed out a parallelism of the description of the solar eclipse in the *Rgveda*, and that in the *Samyukta Nikāya* But we are unable to attach any importance to any suggestion therefrom of any synchronism of the two events We cannot attach also any chronological value to such suggestions [1]

The time of the solar eclipse spoken of in the *Rgveda*, is thus obtained as July 26, 3928 B C This date at once settles the time of Atri, the observer of this eclipse In our finding, this Atri was one of the first batch of the Aryans who tried and succeeded in settling in the northern Punjab As shown before, he took shelter in a cave at the foot of a snow capped peak either of the Himalayas or of the Karakoram range In the chapter on "Madhu-Vidyā" and "When Indra became Maghavan" the dates arrived at were 3995 B C and 4170 B C These dates are perhaps capable of being lowered to about 3928 B C, as these depended on a change of the celestial longitudes of stars due to the precession of the equinoxes The date herein arrived at by a unique determination of a central solar eclipse is not liable to any such change, if as in the present case the most up to date equations for the elements of the sun and the moon given by Newcomb and Brown be assumed as correct for all times, past, present or future We thus arrive at this definite conclusion that the Aryan colonization of India began about 3900 B C

If this last finding be called into question, the name of Atri should be traceable to the past tradition of the Parsis and the ancient Greeks and also of the 'elder race' of Aratos and Eudoxus

Finally, I hope that attention of the astronomers, chronologists and orientalists, all the world over, will be drawn to

[1] The *Samyukta Nikaya*, eclipses are discussed in a subsequent chapter

this finding of the date of the solar eclipse as described in the *Rg-Veda*

It remains now to say something as to the point raised before, that the day of the solar eclipse in question, *viz*, the *Visuvān*, if estimated, may be two or even three days before the actual S S day, I could find the following alternative solar eclipses —

(i) On July 24,4058 B C., on which at G M N,
Mean sun= 89° 5′ 48′ 92
,, Moon= 91°24′ 17″ 06,
Lunar Perigee=213°11′ 3″ 92,
D Node= 91°25′ 13″ 97

A central annular eclipse, with a magnitude of about 79 or 9 5 Indian-units on meridian of Kurukṣetra at 33°½ N latitude This happended 3 days before the S S or the *Visuvant* day

(ii) On July 22,3583 B C, on which at G M N,
Mean Sun= 90°51′ 36″ 34
,, Moon= 89°50′ 12″ 83
Lunar Perigee=104°55″ 40″ 31
A Node= 83°18″ 48″ 41

In this case the N M happened at 17 hrs 12 mins of K M T, the end of the eclipse was not visible on the meridian of Kuruksetra at the observers' station. Hence this as a solution is not acceptable

APPENDIX I

Table I

Interval	Julian Date	Luni-solar elements at G M Noon				Remarks
		Mean Sun=	92°	21′	38″ 88	
	4319 B C	,, Moon=	91°	57	42 79	New Moon 13hrs
	July 29	D Node =	99°	50	55 98	before G M N
		Perigee =	29	40	21 44	Node unfavourable
19 yrs.						
		Mean Sun=	92°	44′	46 51	
	4300 B C	,, Moon =	96	6	45 19	New moon 14 hrs
	July 29	D Node=	92	18	16 33	before G. M Noon
		Perigee =	83	3	38 47	

TABLE 1 *(Contd.)*

Interval	Date		°	′	″	Remarks
372 yrs						
	3928 B C	Mean Sun =	92°	30′	50″92	
	July 26	,, Moon =	92	19	31 20	
		D Node =	96	36	55 35	
		Perigee =	103	37	10 50	
19 yrs						
	3909 B C	Mean Sun =	92°	53′	59″86	
	July 26	,, Moon =	96	28	42 40	Not visible in
		D Node =	89	4	24 65	upper India
		Perigee =	155	18	4 87	
372 yrs						
	3537 B C.	Mean Sun =	92	40	37 37	
	July 23	,, Moon =	92	44	21 50	New Moon 8 hrs
		D Node =	93	26	0 00	after G M N
		Perigee =	175	30	44 28	
372 yrs						
	3165 B C	Mean Sun =	92°	27	44·65	N Moon about
	July 20	,, Moon =	89	2	47 65	12 hrs after
		D Node =	97	50	27 48	G M N
		Perigee =	198	26	16 72	
19 yrs						
	3146 B C	Mean Sun =	92°	50′	56·75	
	July 21	,, Moon =	93	12	16 46	Not visible in
		D Node =	90	18	14 87	Northern India
		Perigee =	250	45	42 07	
372 yrs						
	2774 B C	Mean Sun =	92°	38′	35 56	
	July 18	,, Moon =	89	33	40 15	N Moon 2 hrs.
		D Node =	94	45	43 88	after G. M N
		Perigee =	269	31	23 80	
372 yrs.						
	2402 B C.	Mean Sun =	92°	26	44 54	
	July 15	,, Moon =	85	57	55 39	N M. 9 hrs.
		D Node =	99	16	9 33	later
		Perigee =	290	16	30 04	
19 yrs.						
	2383 B C.	Mean Sun =	92°	49′	59″88	N. M. 8 hrs.
	July 15	,, Moon =	90	7	41 78	before G M N
		D. Node =	91	44	15 03	and not in the pro-
		Perigee =	343	21	29 58	per part of the day

TABLE 2

Interval	Julian Date	Luni-solar elements at G M Noon					Remarks
		Mean Sun	= 94°	11′	58 ″93		N M about 6 hrs
	4607 B C	,, Moon	= 93	48	11 41		later 2 days after
	Aug 2	A Node	= 90	38	58 36		S S.
		Perigee	=187	57	15 92		
372 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 93°	57′	38 ″79		N Moon 12 hrs
	4235 B C	,, Moon	= 89	58	43 54		later Not visible
	July 30	A Node	= 94	55	21 50		in N India
		Perigee	=209	27	48 49		
372 yrs							
		Moon Sun	= 93°	43′	49 ″19		Not visible in N.
	3863 B C	,, Moon	= 86	11′	58 11		India N Moon 17
	July 27	A Node	= 99	14	29 00		hrs later Eclipse
		Per gee	=229	11	14 02		2 days after S S
19 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 94°	6′	59 ″19		
	3844 B C	,, Moon	= 90	21	10 78		Eclipse 2 days
	July 27	A Node	= 91	41	59 82		after S S
		Perigee	=282	37	3 92		
19 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 93°	31	0 23		N Moon about
	3825 B C	,, Moon	= 81	19	48 77		2½ hrs later
	July 26	A Node	= 84	12	41 63		Eclipse not finish-
		Perigee	=336	2	7 09		ed before sunset
353 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 93°	53′	41 ″69		
	3472 B C	,, Moon	= 86	37	18 98		N Moon about
	July 24	A Node	= 96	4	4 48		4½ hrs later.
		Perigee	=302	55	36 26		
19 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 94°	16	52 37		Eclipse 2 days
	3453 B C	,, Moon	= 90	46	38 11		after S S
	July 24	A. Node	= 88	31	44 40		N. M 8 hrs earlier
		Perigee	=356	15	57 77		
353 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 93	40	53 98		
	3100 B C	,, Moon	= 82	56	13 45		N Moon 9 hrs
	July 21	A Node	=100	29	2 49		later
		Perigee	=323	2	6 52		
19 yrs							
		Mean Sun	= 94°	4	6 32		Two days after
	3081 B C	,, Moon	= 87	6	44 65		S S Not visible
	July 21	A Node	= 92	56	51 25		in N. India
		Perigee	= 16	19	46 72		

TABLE 2 (*Contd*)

372 yrs					
		Mean Sun	= 93°	51′ 50″72	
	2709 B C	,, Moon	= 83	28 37 25	N Moon about
	July 18	A Node	= 97	24 50 57	9 hrs later
		Perigee	= 36	11 31 18	
19 yrs					
		Mean Sun	= 94°	15′ 34″50	Two days after
	2690 B C	,, Moon	= 87	38 17 37	S S
	July 19	A Node	= 89	52 49 10	N M 10 hrs later
		Perigee	= 88	28 23 32	
372 yrs					
		Mean Sun	= 94	3 50 17	Two days after
	2318 B C	,, Moon	= 84	3 11 59	S S
	July 16	A Node	= 94	23 54 42	Node unfavourable
		Perigee	=108	3 24 72	

APPENDIX II

CALCULATION OF THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

On July 26, 3928 B C , Julian day=286928

Julian day on 1st Jan 1900=2415021 Hence the epoch is 2128093 days before 1st Jan 1900 of G M noon=58 26 Julian centuries+146 5 days earlier

Mean Luni solar elements at G M Noon on July 26,3928 B C

Let A represent the epoch 8 A M G M T or 1-8 P.M Kuruksetra time,
B ,, ,, ,, 10 A M. ,, ,, 3-8 P M ,, ,,
C ,, ,, ,, 12 Noon ,, ,, 5-8 P M ,, ,,

Mean Sun				*Mean Moon*		
A=92°	20′	59 54		A=90°	7′	45″ 36
B=92	25	55 23		B=91	13	38 28
C=92	30	50 92		C=92	19	31 20

D Node				*Moon's Perigee*		
A=96°	37′	27 11		A=103°	36′	3 66
B=96	37	11 23		B=103	36	37 08
C=96	36	55 35		C=103	37	10 50

Sun's apogee =1° 55′ 57″ 37
,, eccentricity (e)=0 018759
(2e) radians =128′ 977
($\frac{5}{4}e^2$) radians =1′ 512

Longitudes of Sun

	A	B	C
Mean Sun =	92° 21′ 0″	92° 25′ 55″	92° 33′ 51″
Sun's apogee =	1 55 57	1 55 57	1 55 57
g = Sun's anomaly (Indian) =	90° 25′ 3″	90° 29′ 58″	90° 34′ 54″
−128′ 977 Sin g =	−2° 8′ 58″	−2° 8′ 58″	−2° 8′ 58″
+1′ 512 Sin 2g =	−1	−2	−2
Apparent Sun =	90° 12′ 1″	90° 16′ 55″	90° 21′ 51″
Mean Var per hour		2′ 27″ 5	

Longitude of Moon

MEAN ARGUMENTS	A	B	C
l = Moon − Perigee =	346° 31′ 42″	347° 37′ 1″	348° 42′ 21″
$2l$ =	333 3 23	335 14 2	337 24 42
D = Moon − Sun =	357 46 46	358 47 43	359 48 40
2 D =	355 33 32	357 35 26	359 37 20
4 D =	351 7 4	355 10 52	359 14 40
l' = Sun − Sun's perigee =	270 25 3	270 29 58	270 34 54
F =	173 30 18	174 36 27	175 42 36
2F =	347 0 36	349 12 54	351 25 12
$2D-l$ =	9° 1′ 50″	9° 58′ 25″	10° 54′ 59″
$2D-2l$ =	22° 30 8	22 21 24	22 12 39
$2D-l-l'$ =	98 36 47	99 28 26	100 20 5
$2D+l$ =	342 5 14	345 12 27	348 19 40
$2D-l'$ =	85 8 29	87 5 28	89 2 27
$l-l'$ =	76 6 39	77 7 3	78 7 27
$l+l'$ =	256 56 45	258 7 0	259 17 15
$2F-l$ =	0 28 54	1 35 53	2 42 52
$2D-2F$ =	8 32 56	8 22 32	8 12 8
$4D-l$ =	4 35 22	7 33 51	10 32 20

Moon's Inequalities

	A	B	C
+22640 Sin l =	−5274″ 3	−4855″ 0	−4434″ 0
+769 Sin $2l$ =	− 348 4	− 322 1	− 295 4
+4586 Sin $(2D-l)$ =	+ 719 8	+ 794 3	+ 868 5
−125 Sin D =	+ 4 8	+ 2 6	+ 0 4
+2370 Sin 2D =	− 183·5	− 99 6	− 15 6
− 669 Sin l' =	+ 669 0	+ 669 0	+ 669 0
+212 Sin $(2D-2l)$ =	+ 81 1	+ 80 6	+ 80 1
+206 Sin $(2D-l-l')$ =	+ 203 7	+ 203·2	+ 202 7
+192 Sin $(2D+l)$ =	− 59 1	− 49 0	− 38 8
+165 Sin $(2D-l')$ =	+ 161 4	+ 164 8	+ 165 0

		A	B	C
$+148 \sin (l-l')$	=	+ 143 7	+ 144 3	+ 144 8
$-110 \sin (l+l')$	=	+ 107·2	+ 107 7	+ 108 1
$-85 \sin (2F-l)$	=	− 0 7	− 2 4	− 4 0
$+59 \sin (2D-2F)$	=	+ 8 8	+ 8 6	+ 8 4
$+39 \sin (4D-l)$	=	+ 3 1	+ 5 1	+ 7 1
− ves	=	−5866 0	−5328 1	−4787 8
+ ves	=	+2105 6	+2180 2	+2254 1
Total	=	−3760 0	−3147 9	−2533 7
	=	−1° 2′ 40″ 4	−0° 52′ 27″ 9	−0° 42′ 13″·7
Mean Moon	=	90° 7 45 4	91° 13 38 3	92° 19 31 2
Moon on orbit	=	89° 5′ 5″ 0	90° 21′ 10″ 9	91° 37′ 17″·5
A Node (Ω)	=	276 37 27 1	276 37 11 2	276 36 55 4
$F_1 = M - \Omega$	=	172° 27′ 37″ 9	173° 43′ 59″ 2	175° 0′ 22″ 1
$2F_1$	=	344 55 15 8	347 27 58 4	350° 0 44·2
	=	−15° 4′ 44″	−12° 32′ 2″	−9° 59′ 16″
$-417 \sin 2F_1$	=	+0° 1′ 48 5	+ 0 1 30 5	+0° 1′ 12″ 3
Moon on orbit	=	89° 5 5 0	90° 21 10 4	91° 37 17 5
Apparent Moon	=	89° 6 53 5	90° 22′ 40 9	91° 38′ 29″ 8

Mean variation per hour 0° 37′ 54″1

Instant of conjunction is 9 8 mins before B

i e 9 hrs 50 mins A M G M T or 2 hrs 58 mins P M Kurukṣetra time

Arguments for Latitude of Moon

		A	B	C
F_1	=	172° 27′ 38′	173° 43′ 59″	175° 0′ 22″
$2D-2F$	=	8° 32 56	8 22 32	8 12 8″
$F_1+2D+2F$	=	181 0 34	182 6 31	183 12 30
l'	=	270 25 3	270 29 58	270 34 54
F_1-l'	=	262 2 35	263 14 1	264 25 28
F_1+l'	=	82 52 41	84 13 57	85 35 15
l	=	346 31 42	347 37 1	348 42 21
F_1-l	=	185 55 56	186 6 58	186 18 1
F_1-2l	=	199 21 14	198 29 57	197 35 40
$F_1+2D-2F-l'$	=	270 35 31	271 36 33	272 37 36
$F_1+2D-1F+l'$	=	91 25 37	92 36 29	93 47 24
$F_1+2D-2F-l$	=	194 29 52	194 29 30	194 30 9

Latitude of Moon

		A	B	C
$+18518\ 5\ \sin F_1$	=	$+2429\ 7''$	$+2021''\ 5$	$+1612''\ 0$
$+528\ 3\ \sin(F_1+2D-2F)$	=	$-\ 9\ 3$	$-\ 19\ 4$	$-\ 29\ 6$
$-25\ 0\ \sin(F_1-l')$	=	$+24\ 7$	$+\ 24\ 8$	$+\ 24\ 9$
$+23\ 8\ \sin(F_1+l')$	=	$+23\ 6$	$+\ 23\ 7$	$+\ 23\ 7$
$+23\ 2\ \sin(F_1-l)$	=	$-\ 2\ 4$	$-\ 2\ 5$	$-\ 2\ 6$
$-23\ 6\ \sin(F_1-2l)$	=	$+\ 7\ 8$	$+\ 7\ 5$	$+\ 7\ 1$
$+22\ 1\ \sin(F_1+2D-2F-l')$	=	$-22\ 1$	$-22\ 1$	$-\ 22\ 1$
$-10\ 4\ \sin(F_1+2D+2F+l')$	=	$-10\ 4$	$-10\ 4$	$-\ 10\ 4$
$-15\ 4\ \sin(F_1+2D-2F-l)$	=	$+\ 3\ 9$	$+\ 3\ 9$	$+\ 3\ 9$
+ ves	=	$+2489\ 7$	$+\ 2081\ 4$	$+1671{\cdot}6$
− ves	=	$-44\ 2$	$-54\ 4$	$-64\ 7$
Total	=	$+2445\ 5$	$+\ 2027\ 0$	$+1606\ 9$
Latitude°	=	$+42'\ 45''\ 5$	$+\ 33'\ 47\ 0$	$+26'\ 46''\ 9$

Mean variation per hour $= -3'\ 29''\ 6$

Moon's horizontal parallax

$$P = 3422\ ''7 + 186''\ 6 \cos l + 10''\ 2 \cos 2l + 34''\ 3 \cos(2D-l)$$

$$+ 28''\ 3 \cos 2D + 3''\ 1 \cos(2D+l)$$

	B
$+186\ 6 \cos l =$	$+182\ 3$
$+\ 10\ 2 \cos 2l =$	$+\ 9\ 3$
$+\ 34\ 3 \cos(2D-l) =$	$+\ 33\ 8$
$+\ 28\ 3$ oos cD=	$+\ 28\ 3$
$+\ 3\ 1 \cos(2D+l) =$	$+\ 3\ 0$

Constant = 3422 7

Hor parallax = $3679''\ 4 = 61'\ \ 19''\ 4$

Moon's Semi-diameter = $16'\ \ 42''\ 4$

Sun's Semi diameter = $16'\ \ 1''\ 4$

Calculation of the eclipse for longitude of Kurukṣetra and latitude = 33°½ North

	A	B	C
Mean Long of Sun	= 92° 21′ 0″	92° 25′ 55″	92° 30′ 51″
Local time	= 1-8 P.M	3-8 P M.	5-8 P M
Local in degrees	= 17° 0 0	47° 0 0	77° 0 0
R A of meridian or Sidereal time	= 109° 21′ 0″	139° 25 55	169° 30′ 51″

Obliquity of the ecliptic = 24° 6′ 15″

	A	B	C
Long of culminating pt of ecliptic	= 107° 46′ 25″	136° 50′ 5″	168° 32′ 16″
Eclip angle with meridian (θ')	= 82° 13′ 23″	71° 55′ 36″	66° 19′ 23″
Dec of cul point	= +22° 53′ 11″	+16° 13′ 25″	+ 4° 39′ 18″
Lat of place	= +33° 30′ 0″	+33° 30′ 0″	+33° 30′ 0″
Z dist of cul pt = ZC	= 10° 36′ 49″	17° 16′ 35″	28° 50′ 42″
Z dist of Nonagesimal = ZN	= 10° 31′ 9″	16° 23′ 58″	26° 13′ 18″
Parallax in lat	= − 11′ 11″·8	− 17′ 18″ 9	− 27′ 6″ 0
Lat of Moon	= + 40′ 45″ 5	+ 33′ 47″ 0	+ 26′ 46″ 9
Corrected latitude	= + 29′ 33″ 7	+ 16′ 28″ 1	− 0′ 19″ 1

	A	B	C
Z dist of nonagesimal = ZN	= 10° 31′ 9″	16° 23′ 58″	26° 13′ 1 8″
Z dist of cul pt = ZC	= 10° 36′ 49″	17° 16′ 35″	28° 50′ 42″
θ'	= 82° 13′ 23″	71° 55′ 36″	66° 19′ 23″
Cul pt. − nonagesimal = CN	= 1° 27′ 9″	5° 30′ 40″	12° 28′ 19″
Culminating point	= 107° 46′ 25″	136° 50′ 5″	168° 32′ 16″

		A	B	C
∵ Nonagesimal	= N =	106° 19′ 16″	131° 19′ 25″	156° 3′ 57″
App Sun	=	90° 12′ 1″	90° 16′ 55″	90° 21′ 51″
N − ⊙	=	16° 7′ 15″	41° 2′ 30″	65° 42′ 6″
ZN	=	10° 31′ 9″	16° 23′ 58″	26° 13′ 18″
Parall in Long	=	− 16′ 44″ 4	− 38′ 37″ 6	− 50′ 8″ 4
Long of Moon	=	89° 6 53 5	90 22′ 40 9	91° 38′ 29″ 8
Corrected Moon	=	88° 50′ 9″ 1	89° 44′ 3″ 3	90° 48′ 21″ 4
App Sun	=	90° 12 1	90° 16 55	90° 21 51
☽ − ⊙	=	−1° 21′ 52″	−0° 32′ 52″	+0° 26′ 30″
1st diff	=	+ 49′ 0″	+ 59′ 22″	
2nd diff	=		+ 10′ 22″	

∴ ☽ − ⊙ $= -0°32'52'' + (5411'')t + (5'11'')t^2 = \lambda$

Where t is measured from B in units of 2 hrs

Corrected latitude	=	+ 29′ 33″ 7	+ 16′ 28″ 1	− 0′ 19″ 1
1st diff	=	− 13′ 5″ 6	− 16′ 47″ 2	
2nd diff	=		− 3′ 41″ 6	

Corrected latitude $= 16'\ 28''\ 1 - (14'\ 56''\ 4)t - (1'\ 50''\ 8)t^2 = \psi$

Sum of Semi-diameters = 1964″ (M + S)

Diff of Semi-diameters = 41″ (M − S)

Kurukṣetra mean time	X	ψ	$\sqrt{X^2+\psi^2}$		
3-8 P M	−1972″	+988″	2206″		
				−837	
3-38 ,,	−1140	+757	1369		
				−791	
4-8 ,,	−269	+512	578		
				+111	+1692
4-38 ,,	+640	+254	689		
				+901	
5 8 ,,	+1590	−19	1590		
				+1005	
5-38 ,,	+2577	−305	2595		

Nearest approach of the centres of the Sun and the Moon occurs 37 × 30 mins after 4 8 P M, i e, at 4-19 P M

Minimum distance = 521″

Mag of eclipse = 735 = 8 8 Indian units

$$\text{Time of beginning} = 3 \text{ hrs } 8 \text{ mins} + \frac{2206-1964}{837} \times 30 \text{ mins}$$

$$= 3 \text{ hrs } 8 \text{ mins} + 9 \text{ mins} = 3\text{-}17 \text{ P M}$$

$$\text{Time of ending} = 5 \text{ hrs } 8 \text{ mins} + \frac{1964-1590}{1005} \times 30 \text{ mins}$$

$$= 5 \text{ hrs } 8 \text{ mins} + 11 \text{ mins} = 5 \text{ hrs} - 19 \text{ mins P M}$$

The same Calculations for lat of place = 35°½ N

		A	B	C
Long of cul pt	=	107° 46′ 25″	136° 50′ 5″	168° 32′ 16″
θ′	=	82° 13′ 23″	71° 55′ 36″	66° 19′ 23″
Dec of cul pt	=	+22° 53′ 11″	+16° 13′ 25″	+4° 39′ 18″
Lat of place	=	+35° 30′ 0″	+35° 30′ 0″	+35° 30′ 0″
Z dist of cul pt = ZC	=	12° 36′ 49″	19° 16′ 35″	30° 50′ 42″
Z dist of nonagesimal = ZN	=	12° 29′ 44″	18° 17′ 25″	28° 0′ 20″
Parall in lat	=	− 13′ 16″ 1	− 19′ 14″ 7	− 28′ 47″ 7
Moon's lat	=	+ 40′ 45″ 5	+ 33′ 47″ 0	+ 26′ 46″ 9
Corrected lat	=	+ 27′ 29″ 4	+ 14′ 32″ 3	− 2′ 0″ 8
Z dist of cul pt. = ZC	=	12° 36′ 49″	19° 16′ 35″	30° 50′ 42″
θ′	=	82° 13′ 23″	71° 55′ 36″	66° 19′ 23″
Cul pt − nonagesimal = CN	=	1° 44′ 4″	6° 11′ 32″	13° 20′ 9″
Cul pt	=	107° 46′ 25″	136° 50′ 5″	168° 32′ 16″
Nonagesimal	=	106° 2′ 21″	130° 38′ 33″	155° 12′ 7″
App Sun	=	90° 12′ 1″	90° 16′ 55″	90° 21′ 51″
Nonagesimal − Sun	=	15° 50′ 20″	40° 21′ 38″	64° 50′ 16″
Z dist of nonagesimal = ZN	=	12° 29′ 41″	18° 17′ 25″	28° 0′ 20″

Horizontal parallax of (Moon − Sun) = 3670″ 6

Parallax in long	=	− 16′ 18″ 1	− 37′ 36″ 9	− 48′ 53″ 1
Long of Moon	=	89° 6′ 53 5	90° 22′ 40″·9	91° 38′ 29″ 8
Corrected Long	=	88° 50′ 35″ 4	8° 45′ 4″ 0	90° 49′ 36″ 7
Sun	=	90° 12′ 1″	90° 16′ 55″	90° 21 51
☽ − ☉	=	−1° 21′ 26″	−0° 31′ 51″	+0° 27′ 46″
	=	−4886″	−1911″	+1666″
1st diff	=	+2975″	+3577″	
2nd diff	=		+602″	

∴ ☽ − ☉ = χ = $-1911'' + 3277t + 301t^2$ where t is measured in units of 2 hrs from B

Corrected lat	=	+ 27′ 29″	+ 14′ 32″	− 2′ 1″
	=	+ 1649″	+872″	−121″
1st diff	=	−777	−993	
2nd diff	=		−216	

Corrected lat = ψ = $+872'' - 885\ t - 108t^3$

Sum of Semi-diameters = 1964″ (M + S)

Diff ,, ,, ,, = 41″ (M − S)

Kuruksetra mean time	χ	ψ	$\sqrt{\chi^2+\psi^2}$		
3-8 P M	−1911″	+872″	2101″		
				−422	
3 23 ,,	−1497	+760	1679		
				−428	
3-38 ,,	−1073	+644	1251		
				−423	
3-53 ,,	−640	+525	828		
				−379	
4 8 ,,	−198	+403	449		+306
				−73	
4-23 ,,	+254	+277	376		+427
				+354	
4-38 ,,	+715	+148	730		
				+456	
4-53 ,,	+1186	+15	1186		
				+484	
5-8 ,,	+1666	−121	1670		
				+502	
5-23 ,,	+2156	−260	2172		

Time of beginning $= \dfrac{2101-1964}{422} \times 15$ mins $= 4{\cdot}87$ mins

after 3-8 P M, i.e., at 3-13 P M

Time of ending $= \dfrac{1964-1670}{502} \times 15$ mins $= 8\ 79$ mins

after 5-8 P M i e, at 5-17 P M

Duration of eclipse = 2 hrs 4 mins

Nearest approach of the centres = 361″ at 4 18 P M

Mag of eclipse = 0 792 = 9 5 Indian units

APPENDIX III

A Note on a Method of Finding a Central Solar eclipse near a Past Date

The problem of the chapter to which this is an appendix, was to find a central solar eclipse on the summer solstice day, visible in the northern Punjab, within the range 4000 B C to 2400 B C As shown in the body of the paper a central solar eclipse happening on the 21st July, 3146 B C, obtained by a pure chance formed the starting point for further calculations A method now occurs to me which shows that a chronologist need not depend upon any such chance Further he need not also depend on a book like Oppolzer's in which all eclipses are calculated from 1200 B C up to the modern times The equations for the moon's elements used by Oppolzer were those given by Hansen, which have been thrown away by international astronomers Hence Oppolzer's great work has become more or less valueless We have now to use Newcomb's equations for the sun's elements and Brown's for those of the moon To undertake another great work like that of Oppolzer with the most up to date system of astronomical constants should be now considered unnecessary on the score of the labour it entails in the light of the elegant method presented in this note

Problem 1 To find a central solar eclipse near the date 4000 B C happening on the summer solstice day and visible from the northern Punjab

Here we are to remember that the longitude of the ascending node should be about 85° or that of the descending node about 95°, on the day of the eclipse if this is to be visible from the northern Punjab

(a) We first work out the shifting of the equinoxes from 4001 B C to the present time, say 1940 A D. This works out to have been 82° 27′ 23″ nearly. Hence what was 90° of the longitude of the sun in 4001 B C, would become 172° 27′ 23″ in 1940 The sun has this longitude now about the 16th September.

(b) Now on looking up the nautical almanacs, we find that there was a new-moon on the 15th September, 1936

(c) Again from 4001 B C. to 1940 A D., the number of years elapsed=5940 The correct luni-solar cycles in sidereal years are 1939 and 160 years

$$\text{Now } 5940 = 1939 \times 3 + 123.$$

Hence the elapsed years 5940, have to be increased by 37 years and we have,

$$5977 = 1939 \times 3 + 160.$$

(d) We then apply 5977 sidereal years or 2183137 days backward to the date, 15th September, 1936, and arrive at the date 4042 B.C, July, 26

(e) On this date G M.N., the longitude of the moon's ascending node was=321° 42′ 36″·82

(f) We now use the eclipse cycle of 19 tropical years in which the node's position is decreased by 7° 32′ nearly We want to reduce the longitude of 321°43′ of the node to about 275°, i e, by 46° 43′ which comprises 7°52′ six times nearly. Hence we have to come down 19×6 or 114 years. The year arrived at is 3928 B C Calculation of the eclipse on the summer solstice day of this year may now proceed as shown in the body of the paper, remembering that in 114 years (tropical) there are 41638 days.

Problem 2 To find the central solar eclipse which happened on the autumnal equinox day visible in the northern Punjab and near about the year 1400 B C

On the autumnal equinox day the sun attains the longitude of 180° In order that the eclipse may be visible in the northern Punjab, the ascending node should have a longitude of about 175° or the descending node 185° nearly.

(a) From 1401 B C till 1940 A D. the shifting of the equinoxes becomes 46° 17′ 26″. Hence what was 180° of the longitude of the sun in 1401 B C has become 226° 17′ 26″ in present times This corresponds to the date of November, 10 of our times

(b) On looking up nautical almanacs we can find that a new-moon happened on November, 10, 1931 A D

(c) Now the elapsed years 3340, till 1940 A D need be adjusted a little as before, we have to increase it by 39 years, and we have,

$$3379 = 1939 + 160 \times 9$$

(d) We apply to the 10th November, 1931 A D , 3379 sidereal years or 1234201 days backward, and arrive at the date 1449 B C October, 5

(e) On this date the longitude of the ascending node at G M N was=201° 2′ 23″

(f) We have to reduce this longitude of the node to 175° nearly by using our eclipse cycles. Now by our cycle of 19 years, repeated four times, we can reduce it by 30° 8′ to 170° 54′ by coming down to 1373 B C We have now to raise it from 170° 54′ by a further coming down by the eclipse cycle of 372 years, to 175° 15′ nearly for the autumnal equinox day of the year *1001 B C , as in Oppolzer's finding*

Altogether we had to come down by $19 \times 4 + 372 = 448$ tropical years

Hence by the method thus illustrated, we can find near about any past date, any sort of solar eclipse we have any record of, however vague it may be There is thus no necessity for finding all the solar eclipses from so far back a date as 4000 B C. up to our modern times

I trust the attention of astronomers and chronologists all over the world, will be drawn to the method presented here for finding an eclipse of a back date, and hope they would further develop it and remove from it any flaws that they may discover

CHAPTER X

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Heliacal Rising of λ and ν Scorpionis in Atharva Veda

In the Atharva Veda[1] the heliacal rising of the two stars λ and ν *Scorpionis* is mentioned in II, 8 and III, 7 We quote the first verse as translated and annotated by Whitney It is almost the same verse that is repeated in the two hymns which were used in incantations for relief from the disease *Ksetriya* [1]

" Arisen are the two blessed stars called unfasteners (*Vicrta*), let them unfasten (*Vimuc*) of the *Ksetriya* the lowest, the highest fetter "

Whitney's note runs as follows —

' The disease *Ksetriya* (lit'ly, of the field) is treated elsewhere, especially in iii, 7 (mentioned also in ii 10 , 14 5 , iv 18 7) The commentator defines it here as apparently an infectious disorder, of various forms, appearing in a whole family or perhaps endemic. The name *Vicrtau*, 'the two unfastners' is given later to the two stars in the sting of the Scorpion (λ and ν *Scorpionis*), and there seems to be no good reasons to doubt that they are the ones here intended , the selection of two so inconspicuous stars is not any more strange than the appeal to stars at all , the commentator identifies them with *Mūlā*, which is the asterism composed of the scorpion's tail "

Whitney concludes by " Their (the two stars) healing virtue would doubtless be connected with the meteorological conditions of the time at which their heliacal rising takes place ".[2]

[1] (*a*) उदगाता भगवती विचृतौ नाम तारके ।
विक्षेत्रियस्य मुञ्चतामधमं पाशमुत्तमम् ॥१॥
A V II, 8, 1

(*b*) अमूये दिवि सुभगे विचृतौ नाम तारके ।
विक्षेत्रियस्य मुञ्चतामधमं पाशमुत्तमम् ॥४॥
A V. III, 7, 4

According to Sāyana, *ksetriya* diseases are Phthisis, Leprosy, Epilepsy, Hysteria and the like. We feel that the diseases included under this name *Ksetriya* are those skin and lung diseases which are aggravated by rainy weather and are relieved by the dry atmospheric conditions which follow the rainy season The sore toes which the cultivators have in the rainy season are perhaps also included under the name *Ksetriya* The season-beginning indicated by the heliacal rising of λ and ν *Scorpionis* was that of *Hemanta* or the dewy season

In Indian astronomy, there are recognised six seasons in the twelve months of the year, commencing from the winter solstice day and they are named winter, spring, summer, rains, autumn and *Hemanta* or the dewy season The seasons, rains and autumn comprise four months which are called *Vārsika* in Sanskrit literature, during which the gods are supposed to sleep. These four months are called *Vārsika* (rainy) months in the *Rāmāyana* Thus the sun's celestial longitude at the end of these four months becomes 210°, when the sky is finally 'released' from the clouds according to the estimate of the Sanskrit authors

That the true heliacal rising of the stars λ and ν *Scorpionis* is meant is seen from the following verses with Whitney's commentary

"Let this night fade away (*apa-vas*), let the bewitchers fade away, let the *Ksetriya*-effacing (*-nāśana*) plant fade the *Ksetriya* away"[1]

"In the fading out of the asterisms, in the fading out of the dawns also, from us fade out all that is of evil nature, fade out the *Ksetriya*"[2]

[2] Burgess' *Sūryasiddhānta*, VIII, 9, notes on the *Mūlā* 'junction star.'

[1] अपेय रात्र्युच्छत्वपोच्छन्त्वभिकृत्वरीः ।
वीरुत्क्षेत्रियनाशन्यपक्षेत्रियमुच्छतु ॥

A V II, 8 2

[2] अपवासे नक्षत्राणामपवास उषसामुत ।
अपास्मत् सर्वं दुर्भूतमपक्षेत्रियमुच्छतु ॥

A V. III, 7, 7.

Whitney's note —

"The night at the time of dawn is meant, says the Commentator (doubtless correctly) According to Kauś the hymn accompanies a dousing with prepared water outside the house, with this verse it is to be done at the end of the night"

Thus there is no doubt that the true heliacal rising of the stars λ and ν *Scorpionis* is meant Although the two stars are inconspicuous according to Whitney, the position of the two stars at the end of the tail of *Scorpionis* is remarkable to any watcher of the heavens, as they are very close together, marking the end of the tail The astronomical data is now that there was a time in the Vedic (*Atharvan*) Hindu culture when the heliacal rising of λ *Scorpionis* marked the coming of *Hemanta* or the Dew-season with the sun having the celestial longitude of 210° We take Kuruksetra, as before, for the place of observation, which has a latitude of 30°N

For 1934, the star λ *Scorpionis* had its—

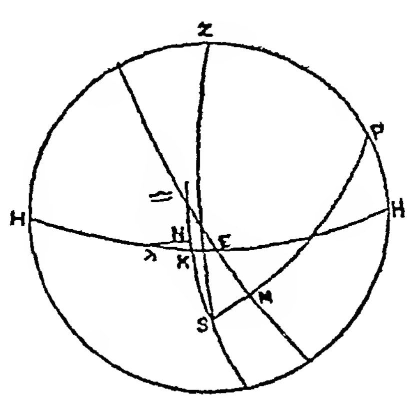
Mean right ascension = 17 hrs 29 mins 7 437 secs, and the mean declination = $-37^\circ\ 3'\ 26''$ 59 secs, while the obliquity of the ecliptic,

$\varpi = 23^\circ\ 26'\ 52''\ 33$

Hence for 1934, the celestial longitude of the star = $263^\circ\ 39'\ 50''$ and the celestial latitude = $-13^\circ\ 46'\ 46''$

The obliquity of the ecliptic for 3400 B C., our assumed date, was = $24^\circ\ 3'\ 42''$

Now when the sun's longitude was 210° the right ascension was = $207^\circ\ 47'\ 51''$, and the declination was = $-11^\circ\ 45'\ 46''$



Let the above figure represent the celestial sphere of the observer at Kuruksetra, HPZH′ the meridian, H′λKEH the horizon, S the position of the sun at 18° below the horizon, P the celestial pole and Z the zenith λ is the point of the east horizon where the star λ *Scorpionis* rose Here ♎NKS is the ecliptic Join ZS and PS by arcs of great circles, PS cutting the celestial equator at the point M From λ draw λN perpendicular to the ecliptic We want to determine ♎N.

Now ZP = 60°, ZS = 108°, PS = $90° + \delta$ = 101° 45′ 46″, ♎S = 30°, ♎M = 27° 47′ 51″, ∠ KE♎ = colatitude = 60° and λN = 13° 46′ 46″

(1) In the triangle ZPS, the three sides ZP, ZS and PS are known Hence the angle ZPS comes out to be = 104° 8′ 16″

and the ∠ZPE is 90° degrees

∴ the arc EM = 14° 8′ 16″

Now ♎M as found already = 27° 47′ 51″

∴ ♎E = 13° 39′ 45″

(2) In the triangle E♎K, the four consecutive parts are —

∠ KE♎ = 60°, E♎ = 13° 39′ 45″, ∠ E♎K = 24° 3′ 42″ and ♎K

Hence we find ♎K = 11° 52′ 44″ and the angle K = 83° 29′ 23″

(3) Now from the triangle λNK, we find that KN = 1° 36′ 13″

Finally ♎K = 11° 52′ 44″

NK = 1° 36′ 13″,

∴ ♎N = 10° 16′ 31″

Hence celestial longitude of λ *Scorpionis* at the required past date was = 190° 16′ 31″ Now in 1934, the same was = 263° 39′ 50″ or the increase in the celestial longitude of the star λ *Scorpionis* = 73° 23′ 19″

The mean precession rate = 49″ 6761

Hence the number of years elapsed till 1934 A D. = 5318, ignoring the proper motion of the star Thus the date becomes 3385 B C.

We have here worked out the date for a tradition about the beginning of autumn at the latitude of Kuruksetra but we cannot say that this was the date of the entire *Atharva Veda* Further we are not sure if the observer's place was 30°N latitude. If we suppose that the observation was made at about 25°N, the date arrived at would not lower it by more than a hundred years Hence the *Atharva Veda* in some of its portions was begun about 3400 B C Although this Veda is traditionally later than the *Rg-Veda,* some portions of it are undoubtedly earlier than the tenth *Mandala* of the *Rg veda* and must be dated at about 2449 B C , the date of the Bhārata battle

CHAPTER XI

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Yama and his Two Dogs

The Vedic god Yama was the Lord of the *Pitrs* (the departed Fathers) and son of *Vivasvant* (Sun) In the Avestic literature he is *Yima*, the son of *Vivanghat* (*Vendiad*, Fargard II, 1, 2 etc). The *Pitrs* or manes were or are the souls of the departed and according to a Hindu's daily ceremony of libation offering to his forefathers are classed into *Agnisvāttas*, *Saumyas*, *Havismanta*, *Usmapās*, *Saukālins*, *Barhisads* and the *Ājyapas* In the *Rg-veda*, however, we get the names of the Fathers as *Barhisads*, *Saumyas* and the *Agnisvāttas* only According to Wilson in Manu they are also termed *Agnisvāttas*, *Barhisads* and the *Saumyas* These *Pitrs* are invoked by the libation offerers as protectors If the order of the *Pitrs* be the lower, the upper and the intermediate, their names are perhaps *Barhisads*, *Saumyas* and *Agnisvāttas* (*Rg-Veda*) in the same order. Now-a-days the *orders* of the *Pitrs* has been increased into seven, the addition being the orders *Havismantas*, *Usmapas*, *Ājyapas* and the *Saukālins* It does not interest us for the present to enquire when these additions were made in the Hindu faith We are here concerned with the faith about their place of abode and of their Lord Yama On this point the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* says —

" 'Two worlds in truth there are,' they say, the 'world of the gods' and the 'world of the Fathers' (*Pitrs*) " [1]

" The world of the gods is in the north and the world of the Fathers (*Pitrs*) in the south "[2]

[1] द्वौ वाव लोकावित्याहुर्देवलोकश्च पितृलोकश्च ।
—*Ś Brāhmana*, XII, 7, 3, 7

[2] उत्तरो वै देवलोको दक्षिणः पितृलोक. ।
—*Ibid*

Thus the *Pitrs* live in the south, consequently their Lord Yama must also be a dweller of the south In a modern Sanskrit Dictionary, Yama is defined to be 'a god appointed by the Supreme Lord for deciding the destinies of departed souls according to their good or bad deeds in this world of ours, and is stationed in the south ' In the *Mahābhārata*, *Vanaparva*, in the story of Sāvitri, it is said that 'Yama having bound the soul of Satyavān went southward ' In another Sanskrit Dictionary Yama is defined as 'the lord of the southern direction ' Hence according to the Hindu faith both Yama and his subjects, the *Pitrs*, are dwellers of the south The Sanskrit word '*Yāmya*' meaning the south, is derived from Yama, the lord of the south

The Hindu when offering libations to his fathers, has to turn to the south and invoke them by the following verse

" Our fathers, the *Saumyas* and the *Agnisvāttas* come by the *Devayāna* route (northward direction) be delighted at the sacrifice by enjoying our offering (*Svadhā*) and bless us May they protect us "[1]

There are the two routes spoken of in the Hindu sacred lore, the one is the *Devayāna* and the other the *Pitryāna*, respectively the route of the gods and the route of the Fathers When the Fathers come, they come by the *Devayāna* route and when they go back, they certainly follow the *Pitryāna* route Thus both the routes may lie on the same meridian, the former is the northward direction and the latter the southward direction Here we have to differ from Tilak who in the book *Orion* would interpret that *Devayāna* route is the part of the ecliptic lying north of the celestial equator and the *Pitryāna* route, the part of the ecliptic south of the celestial equator His interpretation appears to be unjustifiable and incorrect, as the Fathers who come from the south do follow according to the Hindu faith the *Devayāna* route

When men die they follow according to Hindu faith the *Pitryāna* route or the southern direction In this route to the abode of Yama, lay two dogs which were both "spotted four-eyed

[1] आयान्तु न. पितर. सौम्यासोऽग्निष्वात्ता. पथिभिर्देवयानै । अस्मिन् यज्ञे स्वधया मदन्तोऽधि-ब्रुवन्तु ते अवन्त्वस्मान् ।

dogs" The *Rg-veda* verses addressed to the souls of men just departed run thus[1] —

"Pass by a secure path beyond the two spotted four-eyed dogs, the progeny of Sarama, and join the wise *Pitrs* who rejoice fully with Yama"

"Entrust him, O king, to thy two dogs, which are thy protectors, Yama, the four-eyed guardians of the road, renowned by men, and grant him prosperity and health,"—(Wilson)

In the *Atharva Veda* also the corresponding verses are[2] —

"Run thou past the two four-eyed, brindled dogs of Sarama, by a happy road, then go to the beneficent Fathers, who revel in common revelry with Yama"

"What two defending dogs thou has, O Yama, four eyed, sitting by the road, men watching, with them, O King, do thou surround him, assign to him well-being and freedom from disease"—(Whitney)

These two dogs we take to have been the two stars α *Canis minoris* and α *Canis majoris*. The astronomical interpretation becomes that there was a time, Vedic or pre-Vedic, when these two stars pointed to the south celestial pole, *i e*, at that time these two stars crossed the meridian simultaneously or they had the same right ascension We now investigate this problem of determining this past time astronmically

The places of these stars for 1931 A D are given as follows in the Nautical Almanac.

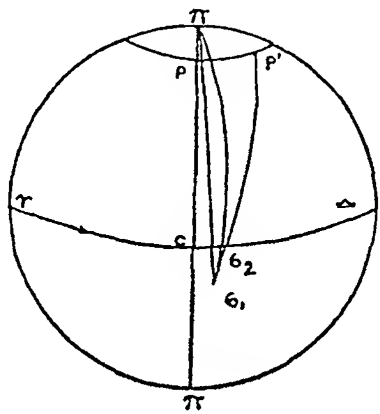
Star	Right Assension	Declination
α *Canis Majoris*	$6^h\ 42^m\ 6^s\ 524$	$-16°\ 37'\ 13''$
α *Canis Minoris*	7 35 41 405	$5°\ 24'\ 11''$

[1] अतिद्रव सारमेयौ श्वानौ चतुरक्षौ शवलौ साधुना पथा। अधा पितॄन्त्सुविदत्राँ उपेहि यमेन ये सधमाद मदन्ति ॥१०॥ यौ ते श्वानौ यम रक्षितारौ चतुरक्षौ पथिरक्षी नृचक्षसौ। ताभ्यामेन परिदेहि राजन् स्वस्ति चास्मा अनमीवं च धेहि ॥११॥ —*Rg Veda*, X, 14, 10 11

[2] अतिद्रव श्वानौ सारमेयौ चतुरक्षौ शवलौ साधुना पथा। अधा पितॄन्त्सुविदत्राँ अपीहि यमेन ये सधमाद मदन्ति ॥११॥ यौ ते श्वानौ यम रक्षितारौ चतुरक्षौ पथिषदी नृचक्षसा। ताभ्यां राजन् परिधेह्येनं स्वस्त्यस्मा अनमीवं च धेहि ॥१२॥ —*Atharva Veda*, XVIII, 2, 11 12

The mean obliquity of the ecliptic was 23° 26′ 54″ in 1931 A D. Hence by transformation of co-ordinates, we get —

Star	Celestial longitude	Celestial latitude
α *Canis Majoris*	103° 7′ 52″	−39° 35′ 24″
α *Canis Minoris*	114° 50′ 0″	−16° 0′ 24″



In the above figure of the celestial sphere, let γC♎ be the ecliptic, π the pole of the ecliptic, P the celestial pole and C the summer solstice in 1931 A D Let σ_1 and σ_2 be the positions of α *Canis Majoris* and α *Canis Minoris* in 1931 Let σ_1 and σ_2 be joined by an arc of a great circle cutting the path of the celestial pole in P′ Then P′ was the pole of the equator at the required time The angle $P'\pi P$ represents the shifting of the solstices

(1) In the triangle $\pi\sigma_1\sigma_2$ the four consecutive parts are :—

$\angle\sigma_2\sigma_1\pi$, $\sigma_1\pi = 90° + 39°35'24''$, $\angle\sigma_1\pi\sigma_2 = 11°42'8''$,
$\pi\sigma_2 = 90° + 16°0'24''$

∴ we get,

$$\cot \sigma_2\sigma_1 - \times \sin 11°42'8''$$
$$= \cos 11° 42' 8'' \times \sin 39° 35' 24'' - \tan 16° 0' 24''$$
$$\times \cos 39° 35' 24''$$

Now put $\cot\phi = \dfrac{\cos 11^\circ\ 42'\ 8''}{\tan 16^\circ\ 0'\ 24''}$ .. $\phi = 16^\circ\ 19'\ 43''$

Hence we get,

$$\cot\sigma_2\sigma_1\pi = \frac{\tan 16^\circ\ 0'\ 24'' \times \sin 23^\circ\ 15'\ 41''}{\sin 11^\circ\ 42'\ 8'' \times \sin 16^\circ\ 19'\ 43''}$$

$$\sigma_2\sigma_1\pi = 26^\circ\ 42'\ 55''$$

(2) Again in the triangle $\sigma_1\pi P'$, the value of $\pi P'$ was very nearly $24^\circ\ 7'\ 32''$ about 4350 B C The four consecutive parts are —

$$\angle P'\sigma_1\pi = 26^\circ\ 42'\ 55'',\quad \pi\sigma_1 = 90^\circ + 39^\circ\ 35'\ 24'',$$
$$\angle \sigma_1\pi P',\ \pi P = 24^\circ\ 7'\ 32''$$

We get readily,

$$\sin\sigma_1\pi P' \times \cot 26^\circ\ 42'\ 55'' - \cos\sigma_1\pi P' \times \sin 39^\circ\ 35'\ 24''$$
$$= \cot 24^\circ\ 8'\ 42'' \times \cos 39^\circ\ 32'\ 24''.$$

$$\text{Put } \cot\theta = \frac{\cot 26^\circ\ 42'\ 55''}{\sin 39^\circ\ 36'\ 24''}$$

then $\theta = 17^\circ\ 47'\ 0''$.

Hence we get,

$$\sin(\sigma_1\pi P' - \theta) = \sin\theta \times \cot 24^\circ\ 7'\ 32'' \times \cot 39^\circ\ 35'\ 24''$$

$$\therefore\quad \sigma_1\pi P' = 17^\circ\ 47'\ 0'' + 55^\circ\ 33'\ 5'' = 73^\circ\ 20'\ 5''$$

The celestial longitude of α *Canis Majoris* (1931 A D)
$= 103^\circ\ 7'\ 52''$

Hence the celestial longitude of P′ for 1931 A.D
$= 103^\circ\ 7'\ 52'' + 73^\circ\ 20'\ 5'' = 176^\circ\ 27'\ 57''$

∴ the $\angle P\pi P'$ or the shifting of the summer solstitial point up to 1931 A D $= 176^\circ\ 27'\ 57'' - 90^\circ = 86^\circ\ 27'\ 57''$

The elapsed time thus comes out to be 6280 years till 1931 A.D and the required date is, therefore, 4350 B C

Second Method.

We can follow a second method to determine the past time when α *Canis Majoris* and α *Canis Minoris* had the same right

ascension In Dr Neugebauei's *Sterntafelen*, the right ascensions and declinations of stais aie given at intervals of 100 yeais, extending fiom 4000 B C downwards We tabulate the right ascenisons of these two stais from -3600 to -4000 A D

Yeai	R A of *a Canis Majoris*	R A of *a Canis Minoris*	Diffeience	2nd diff
-3600	40° 12	41° 66	1° 54	
-3700	39 04	40 41	1 37	17
-3800	37 96	39·17	1 21	16
-3900	36 88	37 93	1 05	16
-4000	35 80	36 69	0 89	16

Fiom a compaiison of the second differences we find that these become steady from -3700 A D at the iate of 0° 16 per hundred years Hence the difference between the right ascensions of the two stars would vanish $\frac{89}{16} \times 100$ yeais or 556 years before -4000 A D *i e* at about 4557 B C

There is thus a difference of about 200 yeais in the two determinations of the time of the event by the two methods, but I tiust the date obtained befoie *viz* 4350 B C is the moie coriect, as it is based on the elements of these stars determined by using moie accuiate instruments in iecent times Another point that needs be considered heie is this What must have been the initial eiror of obseivation in this connection

Now let us see what could have been the initial eiror if the epoch foi the observation be taken as 4000 B C

The total shifting of the equinoxes during the interval of 5930 years between 4000 B C to 1931 A D = 81°42′50″ If this be subtracted from the celestial longitudes of the stais foi 1931 A D, we get their position in 4000 B C Hence the

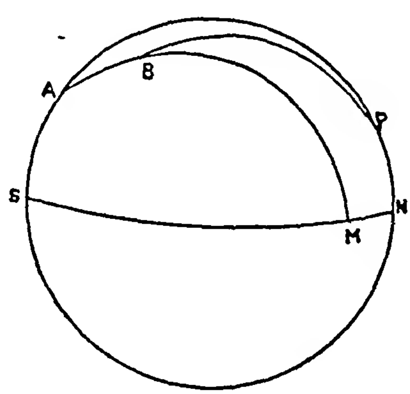
celestial co-ordinates of the stars in 4000 B C are as follows (supposing the latitude to remain the same throughout) —

Star	Celestial longitude	Celestial latitude
α *Canis Majoris*	21° 24′ 59″	−39° 35′ 24″
α *Canis Minoris*	33° 7′ 7″	−16° 0′ 24″

In 4000 B C the obliquity of the ecliptic was ϖ=24°6′35″.

Hence by transformation of the co-ordinates, we get —

Star	Right Ascension	Declination
α *Canis Majoris*	35° 46′ 27″	−27° 50′ 28″
α *Canis Minoris*	36° 19′ 42″	−2° 8′ 48″



In the above figure let A represent the position of the star *Canis Majoris* when on the meridian at the latitude of Kuru-ksetra (30° N) in 4000 B C and B the position of the other star α *Canis Minoris*, NMS the eastern horizon Join AB by an arc of a great circle and produce it to meet the horizon at M Join B to P, the pole of the celestial equator

Now in the triangle ABP, the four consecutive parts are

$\angle$BAP, AP = $90^\circ + 27^\circ\ 50'\ 28''$, $\angle$ APB = $0^\circ\ 35'\ 15''$
and PB = $90^\circ + 2^\circ\ 8'\ 48''$

By solution of the triangle, the $\angle$ BAP is found to be $1^\circ\ 16'\ 37''$

Now in the triangle ANM, we have

AN = AP+30° = $147^\circ\ 50'\ 28''$
$\angle$ MAN = $1^\circ\ 16'\ 37''$ and $\angle$ MNA = a rt angle

Now tan MN = sin AN tan MAN

Therefore MN is found to be $0^\circ\ 40'\ 47''$

There was thus not much azimuth error even at 4000 B C at Kuruksetra, if the observer took the great circle passing through the two stars as lying on the meridian, at the time of the transit of α *Canis Majoris*

The mean date for the equality of the right ascensions of these stars being 4350 B.C , as shown before, we have thus shown that the date may as well be brought down to 4000 B C Equally strong reasons there may also be for raising the date by 350 years, *viz* , to 4700 B C. Further the mythology as to Yama and his two dogs was perhaps the same for the Hindus, the Greeks and the Parsis

The *Rg-Veda* also speaks of the divine Vessel or boat in the following terms[1] —

" May we for our well-being ascend the well-oared, defectless, unyielding divine vessel, the safe-sheltering expansive heaven, exempt from evil, replete with happiness, exalted and right directing "—(Wilson)

The *Atharva Veda* also says —

" A golden ship, of golden tackle, moved about in the sky , there the gods won the *Kustha*, the flower of immortality "[2]

—(Whitney) *A V* V, 4, 4 and VI, 95 2

[1] सुत्रामाणं पृथिवीं द्यामनेहसं सुशर्माणमदितिं सुप्रणीतिम् ।
दैवीं नावं स्वरित्रामनागसमस्रवन्तीमा रुहेमा स्वस्तये ॥१०॥

—*Rg Veda*, X, 63, 10

[2] हिरण्ययी नौरचरद्धिरण्यबन्धना दिवि ।
तत्रामृतस्य पुष्पं देवाः कुष्ठमवन्वत ॥४॥

"The well-oared ship of the gods, unleaking, may we, guiltless, embark in order to well-being " [1]

" A golden ship of golden tackle, moved about in the sky there is the sight of immortality , thence was born the *Kustha* " [2]

—(Whitney)

Here the wish is, perhaps, that the departed souls going southward by the road guarded by the two dogs, α *Canis Minoris* and α *Canis Majoris*, may ascend the divine boat—*Argo-Navis* and enjoy blissful expeditions in the heavenly river—the milky way in the world of Yama

All these constellations *viz* , the two dogs and the *Argo-Navis* are to be found not only in the Vedas, but a'so in Greek and the Parsi Mythology While in the Hindu literature these constellations were forgotten and called by other names, for example *Canis Majoris* by *Lubdhaka* (the Hunter) and *Canis Minoris* by a star of the naksatra *Punarvasu* and the *Argonavis* is quite lost sight of in the later Hindu literature, the constellations are still used and so named in western astronomy The names of the two dogs of Yama are preserved in the *Zendavesta* [3] In the Parsi legend these two dogs 'keep the *Kinvat* Bridge' as imagined to have been made over the milky way In the Greek legend the milky way is crossed by a ferry boat, *i.e* , the *Argonavis*

All these considerations lead us to think that the tradition about Yama's Dogs, belongs to the date of about 4700 B C and before the time when the Āryan peoples migrated to different

हिरण्मयाः पन्थान आसन्नरित्राणि हिरण्मया ।
नावो हिरण्मयीरासन् याभिः कुष्ठं निरावहन् ॥४॥

1 सुत्रामाणं पृथिवीं द्यामनेहसं सुशर्माणमदितिं सुप्रणीतिं ।
दैवीं नावं स्वरित्रामनागसो अस्रवन्तीमारुहेमा स्वस्तये ॥

—*A V* VII, 6, 3

2 हिरण्मयी नौरचरद्धिरण्यबन्धना दिवि ।
तत्रामृतस्य चक्षणं ततः कुष्ठो अजायत ॥

—*A V* 19, 39 7.

3 Sacred Books of the East—*The Zend Avesta*, Vol IV pages 190, F XVIII, 6 (141, page 213, F XIX, 30 (98) , also page 150, F XIII 9 (21) See also Introduction to the same, p lxxxvii § 4

countries from their ancient homes This ancient tradition in relation to the above constellations survived in the Vedas and with the western immigrants These Aryan peoples probably lived near about the Central Asian mountain range running east west from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean Here I have to differ from late Tilak, who in his book '*Orion*', in the chapter on "the antelope's head," cites this tradition as a confirmation of his finding that the vernal equinox for the time was at the Antelope's Head' which according to him was the *Mrgaśira's* cluster The tradition belongs to the pre-Vedic age, as I have shown before

CHAPTER XII

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Legend of Prajāpati and Rohini

In the *Aitareya Brāhmana* [1] (iii, 36 or ch 13, 9) the above legend is thus stated We quote below the translation by Keith in his *Rg-Veda Brāhmanas*

" Prajāpati felt love for his own daughter, the sky some say, *Usās* others Having become a stag he approached her in the form of a deer (who had also become a deer) The gods saw him 'A deed unknown Prajāpati now does' They sought one to punish him, they found him not among one another The most dread forms they brought together in one place Brought together they became this deity here. therefore is his name containing (the word) *Bhūta*, he prospers who knows thus his name To him the gods said, 'Prajāpati here hath done a deed unknown, pierce him' 'Be it so' he replied, 'Let me choose a boon from you.' 'Choose' (they said) He chose this boon, the over-lord-ship of cattle, therefore does his name contain the word 'cattle' Rich in cattle he becomes who knows thus this name of his Having aimed at him, he pierced him, being pierced he flew up upwards, him they call 'the deer' The piercer of the deer is he of that name (*Mrgavyādha*). The

[1] प्रजापतिर्वै स्वां दुहितरमभ्यध्यायद्दिवमित्यन्य आहुरुषसमित्यन्ये तामृश्यो भूत्वा रोहितं भूता-मभ्यैत् तं देवा अपश्यन्नकृतं वै प्रजापतिः करोतीति ते तमैच्छन्य एनमारिष्यत्येतमन्योन्यस्मिन्नाविन्दं स्तेषां या एव घोरतमास्तन्व आसंस्ता एकधा समभरंस्ताः संभृता एष देवो भवत्तदस्य तद्भूतवन्नाम भवति वै स यो ऽस्यैतदेवं नाम वेद तं देवा अब्रुवन्नयं वै प्रजापतिरकृतमकरिमं विध्येति स तथेत्यब्रवीत् स वै वो वरं वृणा इति वृणीष्वेति स एतमेव वरमवृणीत पशूनामाधिपत्यं तदस्यैतत् पशुमन्नाम पशुमान् भवति यो ऽस्यैतदेवं नाम वेद तमभ्यायत्याविध्यत् स विद्ध ऊर्ध्व उदप्रपत तमेतं मृग इत्याचक्षते य उ एव मृगव्याधः स उ एव स या रोहित् सा रोहिणी यो एवेषुस्त्रिकाण्डा सो एवेषुस्त्रिकाण्डा तद्वा इदं प्रजापतेरेतः सिक्तमधावत्तत्सरो भवत् ॥

female deer is Rohinī. The three pointed arrow is the three pointed arrow (*trikāndā*). The seed of Prajāpati outpoured ran, it became a pond (*Saras* = a lake ?)."

The Aitareya Brāhmana passage is concluded by the sentence "for the gods are lovers of mystery as it were." We would add here that not only were the gods lovers of mystery but that their worshippers, the Vedic people were more so. If again Prajāpati were a real person, we can only imagine how he would have treated those people who were his worshippers and who indulged in such an obscene and vulgar allegory about himself.

This legend has been noticed by Tilak in his *Orion*, S. B. Diksita in his *Bhāratiya Jyotihśāstra*, but the correct astronomical interpretation has not yet been found. Tilak and Diksita would understand that the astronomical phenomenon referred to in the passage indicates the time when the vernal equinox was at the *Mrgasiā* cluster or λ, ϕ_1 and ϕ_2 *Orionis*. But our interpretation would be different. For the legend we have also to compare "*S. Br.* I, 7, 4, 1; *Rv.* X, 61, 5-9," as Keith states. Another reference is *Tāndya Br.* 8, 2, 19. The *Mahābhārata Sauptika parva*, 18, 13-14, is another place where the same legend is stated without any obscenity as found in the *Rg-Veda* and the *Aitareya Brāhmana*. It is possible, however, that the *M. Bh.* legend is later than the one recorded in the Vedic literature. The Vedic legend speaks of the birth of Rudra, while the *M. Bh.* legend refers to the ignoring by the gods of the share of Rudra in a sacrifice.

The phenomenon of Prajāpati meeting his daughter Rohinī is stated in the *Rg-Veda* as to have happened in mid-heaven thus:[1]

"When the deed was done in *mid-heaven* in the proximity of the father working his will, and the daughter coming together, they let the seed fall slightly; it was found upon the high place of sacrifice."—(Wilson)

[1] मध्या यत् कर्त्वमभवदभीके कामं कृण्वाने पितरि युवत्याम् ।
मनानग्रेतो जहतुर्वियन्ता सानौ निषिक्तं सुकृतस्य योनौ ॥
—*Rg Veda*, X, 61. 6.

The astronomical phenomenon was observed in mid-heaven or on the meridian of the observer. We have a star called *Prajāpati* in the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, viii, 20, which is identified by Burgess in his translation, with δ *Aurigae*, and his identification is faultless. We have also the *Mrgavyādha* (*Sirius*) of which another Vedic name was *Śvan* (or the Dog), and *Rohini* is of course the star *Aldebaran*.

The legend divested of allegory is that the stars δ *Auriga* and α *Tauri* or *Aldebaran* were observed to cross the meridian almost together. This was understood by the gods as the most improper conduct on the part of Prajāpati, and the god Rudra, then born and stationed at the star *Sirius* pierced Prajāpati (δ *Auriga*), his three-pointed arrow was most probably the line through *θ*, *β* and δ *Auriga*, which have almost the same celestial longitude. Again the star *Sirius*, the three stars at *Orion*'s belt and α *Tauri* or *Aldebaran* are very nearly in the same line. Here Rudra's three-pointed arrow may also mean this latter line through *Orion*'s belt. The word '*trikānda*' does not really mean three pointed, but perhaps having three joints, just as the joints are seen on a bamboo pole or in a sugar cane. If we take the latter meaning for the arrow of Rudra, it would not reach *Prajāpati* or δ *Auriga*, and Rudra would be a bad marksman, for piercing either *Prājāpati* or *Rohini*.

We have thus to look for the time when *Prajāpati* or δ *Auriga* and α *Tauri* or *Aldebaran* had almost the same right ascension.

In 1935 A.D. the celestial positions of these stars were as follows:—

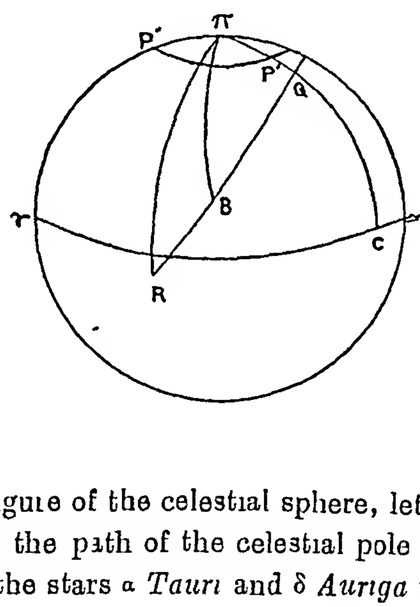
Star	Right Ascension	Declination
δ Auriga	$5^h\ 54^m\ 10.398$	54° 16′ 55.23N
α Tauri	$4^h\ 32^m\ 11.248$	16° 22′ 48.63N

and obliquity of the ecliptic = 23° 26′ 51″.86

After transformation of the co-ordinates, we have the following celestial longitudes and latitudes for the year 1935 A.D

Star	Celestial longitude	Celestial latitude
δ Auriga	89° 0′ 35″	+30° 50′ 21″
α Tauri	68° 52′ 50″	−5° 28′ 19″

The difference in their celestial longitudes was thus 20° 7′ 45″ in 1935 A D In the following calculations the latitudes of the stars are supposed to remain constant throughout



In the above figure of the celestial sphere, let π be the pole of the ecliptic, PP′ the path of the celestial pole round π, R and B the positions of the stars α *Tauri* and δ *Auriga* respectively in the year 1935 A D

(1) In the triangle πRB, the arc $\pi R = 90° + 5° \, 28' \, 19''$, $\pi B = 59° \, 9' \, 39''$ and the angle $R\pi B = 20° \, 7' \, 45''$

Hence the angle πRB becomes $= 26° \, 42' \, 47''$

Now from π draw πPQ perpendicular to the arc RB extended, then πQ becomes $= 26° \, 34' \, 54''$

Thus there was or is no possibility of these two stars to have exactly the same right ascension at any past or future date, as πP can never be equal to or greater than 26° 34′ 54″

We can thus determine only the time of their nearest approach to an equality of their right ascensions

At this time the position of the summer solstitial colure was the arc πPQC

We readily find the angle RπQ = 92° 44′ 50″

Hence the longitude of summer solstitial colure of the date in question was 92° 44′ 50″ *plus* the celestial longitude of *a Tauri* for the year 1935 A D

This was thus

$$= 92° 44' 50'' + 68° 52' 50''$$
$$= 161° 37' 40''$$

The shifting of the solstices thus was 71° 37′ 40″ from which the number of years elapsed till 1935 becomes 5177 and the year or the date was thus 3213 B C in which the right ascension of *a Tauri* or *Rohini* was almost equal to that of δ *Auriga* or *Prajāpati* and the right ascensions of the two stars were also zero near about the same time

The time when δ *Auriga* had its right ascension = 0, its longitude was = 15° 28′ 40″, taking the value of the obliquity of the ecliptic to be 24° 5′ In 1935 the longitude of δ *Auriga* was 89° 0′ 35″, so the increase in the celestial longitude of the star till 1935 A D = 73° 31′ 55″, which represents a lapse of about 5329 years, or the year was about 3395 B C

Similarly when the right ascension of *a Tauri* was = 0, its longitude was = −2° 27′ 1″ (ϖ = 24° 3′)

Hence the increase in the celestial longitude of the star till 1935 A D = 71° 19′ 51″ representing a lapse of about 5167 years and the date was thus 3233 B C

The above two dates, *viz* , 3395 B.C, and 3233 B C had between them an interval of 162 years. The right ascensions of these stars at these two dates are tabulated below —

Stars	R A in 3395 B C	R A in 3233 B C.
δ Auriga	0° 0′ 0″	+2° 2′ 38″
a Tauri	−2° 0′ 28″	0° 0′ 0″

There are two more points in this connection which have to be considered —(1) The time determined, *viz*, 3243 B C being about the time when the equinoxial colure passed through the star α *Tauri*, the question now arises what had the Vedic Hindus to do with the position of the equinoctial colure in their sacrificial year, and (2) why have we identified the star δ *Auriga* of the 4th magnitude with *Prajāpati*, or why we did not take α *Auriga* which is a star of the 1st magnitude and which is called *Brahmahrdaya* or the "heart of Brahmā"

With regard to the first point raised above we can say that the Vedic Hindus had a special sacrifice which was called *Śyāmāka Āgrayana* the first millet harvest sacrifice which is thus described in the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*,[1] IV, 12

"Next as to *Āgrayana* He who desires proper food should sacrifice with the *Āgrayana* In the rains[2] when the millet harvest has come, he gives orders to pluck millet

The new moon night which coincides with that time, on it should he sacrifice and then offer this sacrifice If he is a full-moon sacrificer, he should sacrifice with this and then offer the full-moon sacrifice If again he desires a *naksatra*, he should in the first half of the month look out for a *naksatra* and offer under the *naksatra* which he desires"

—(Keith)

We have not any interest in discussing the small inaccuracies which may be found in Keith's translation, but we take that the rendering is substantially correct The *Śyāmāka śasya* or the millet is reaped in the month of Bhādra (lunar new-moon ending), which may begin from August, 19 to Sept 15, and the full-moon of Bhādra oscillates between Sept 2 and Oct 1. It is thus quite possible for the full-moon of Bhādra to fall on the

[1] अथात आग्रयणस्याग्रयणेनान्नाद्यकामो यजेत । वर्षास्वागते श्यामाकसस्ये श्यामाकान् उद्धर्तवा आह । तस्मिन् कालेऽमावास्योपसम्पद्यते तयेष्ट्वाऽथैतयेष्ट्वा यजेत । यदि पौर्णमास्ये तयेष्ट्वाथ पौर्णमास्येन यजेत । यद्यु नक्षत्रमुपेप्से (मुपेप्सेत्) पूर्वपक्षे नक्षत्रमुदीक्ष्य यस्मिन् नक्षत्रे (कल्याणनक्षत्रे) कामयेत तस्मिन् यजेत ॥

[2] The rains last for four months commencing from the day of summer solstice in North India

23rd of September as it did in the year 1934 A.D , it fell on Sept 25 in 1923, on Sept 22 in 1926 Hence the full-moon of Bhādra is, what is illustrated as the Harvest moon in astronomy and the *Śyāmāka Āgrayana* full-moon was such a Harvest Moon This *Āgrayana* full-moon or the harvest moon is also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* as the full-moon at the *Krttikas* (*vide M Bh , Vana* 82, 31-32 , 82 36-37 , 84 51-52 , *Anuśāsana*, 25, 46) It appears that the Vedic Hindus had to use the autumnal equinoctial day in their sacrificial calendar, and the autumnal equinoctial day is more in evidence than the vernal equinoctial day

It was on such a full-moon night when the sun was at the autumnal equinox, that the conjunction of *Prajāpati* and *Rohinī* (*i e* of δ *Auriga* and α *Tauri*) by the almost simultaneous crossing of the meridian line was observed The date as we have ascertained was about 3245 B C when the vernal equinox colure passed almost straight through the star α *Tauri* Now-a-days a full-moon near the star *Rohinī* (*Aldebaran*) happens on the 2nd December From the 23rd of September to the 2nd of December the number of days=70, and at the rate of 74 years for the shifting of the equinoxes by one day, the time elapsed becomes 5180 years, the date becomes nearly the same 3245 B C The astronomical phenomenon was that at the full-moon, δ *Auriga* and α *Tauri*, almost simultaneously were observed to cross the meridian about the date found here at the place of the observer

As to the second point why we have taken δ *Auriga*, a star of the 4th magnitude for *Prajāpati*, I would say that it is this star that is called so in the *Sūrya-Siddhānta* [1] which has I trust faithfully brought down the tradition to our own times Again δ *Auriga* represents the head of *Auriga*, and it was not improbable that this same constellation used to be called Brahmā in the Vedic literature The star may now be one of the fourth magnitude, it was perhaps not so inconspicuous in those days, *viz* , in the third millennium B C If the whole solar system has been sweeping through space towards either the constellation *Hercules*

[1] *Sūrya Siddhānta*, VIII, 20

or *Lyra*, and the stars in the constellation *Auriga* being almost diametrically opposite have been steadily growing less and less bright Hence δ *Auriga* was not so inconspicuous before the third millennium B C The tradition preserved in the modern *Sūrya-Siddhānta* that Prajāpati itself is the star δ *Auriga* cannot thus be ignored.

Again the star α *Auriga* is called in the *Sūrya-Siddhānta Brahmahrdaya* or the "*Heart of Brahmā*," and the Mahābhārata legend tells us that "Rudra then pierced the heart of *Yajña* (*Prajāpati*) with a dire (*raudra*) arrow, and *Yajña* (or the Sacrifice) fled therefrom in the form of a deer with *Agni* (*β Tauri* ?) That Yajña (Sacrifice or Prajāpati) in that form reached the heavens and shone there, being followed by Rudra "[1] Here *Rohini* or *Aldebaran* does not come in We have to consider the case of the two stars which have almost the same celestial longitude, and these were for 560 A D equal to 62° 32′ and 61° 50′ respectively of *β Tauri* and α *Auriga*, their celestial latitudes were 5° 22′ N and 22° 52′ N This is rather confusing, no astronomical interpretation is possible and the Mahābhārata legend is quite unintelligible The legend of Prajāpati and Rohinī astronomically interpreted does not yield the V Equinox at *Mrgaśirās* as was supposed by Tilak in his *Orion*, pp. 20 *et seq*

[1] *M Bh*, *Sauptika Parvan*, 18 13 14

[1] तत स यज्ञ विव्याध रौद्रेण हृदि पत्रिणा ।
अपक्रान्तस्ततो यज्ञो मृगो भूत्वा सपावक. ॥
स तु तेनैव रूपेण दिव प्राप्य व्यराजत ।
अन्वीयमानो रुद्रेण युधिष्ठिर नभ.स्थले ॥

CHAPTER XIII

VEDIC ANTIQUITY

Solstice Days in Vedic Literature and Yajurveda Antiquity

In the present chapter it is proposed to exmine first if the Vedic Hindus knew of any method for determining the day of the winter or of his summer solstice, and secondly to interpret the various statements as to the solstice days as found in the *Kausitaki Brāhmana*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Mahābhārata* and to settle the approximate dates in Vedic chronology as indicated by these statements

(I) *The method of finding the solstice days in Vedic Literature*

The method of the Vedic Hindus for determining the solstice days is thus expressed in the following passage from the *Aitareya Brāhmana*[1]

एकविंशमेतदहरुपयन्ति विषुवन्तं मध्ये संवत्सरस्य इति। एतेन वै देवा एकविंशेनाऽदित्यं स्वर्गाय लोकायादयच्छन् इति। स एष इत एकविंशः इति। तस्य दशावस्तादहानि दिवाकीर्त्तस्य भवन्ति दशपरस्तान् मध्य एष एकविंश उभयतो हि वा एष विराजि प्रतिष्ठितस्तस्मादेषोन्तरेमाँल्लोकान् यन्न व्यथते इति।

तस्य वै देवा आदित्यस्य स्वर्गाल्लोकादवपातादविभयुस्तं त्रिभिः स्वर्गैर्लोकैरवस्तात् प्रत्युत्तभ्नुवन् स्तोमा वै त्रयः स्वर्गालोकास्तस्यपराचोऽतिपातादविभयुस्तं त्रिभिः स्वर्गैर्लोकैः परस्तात् प्रत्यस्तभ्नुवन्। स्तोमा वै त्रयः स्वर्गा लोकास्तत्त्रयोऽवस्तात् सप्तदशा भवन्ति त्रयः परस्तान् मध्य एष एकविंश उभयतः स्वरसामभिधृतः उभयतो हि वा एष स्वरसानभिधृत स्तस्मादेषोऽन्तरेमाँल्लोकान् यन्न व्यथते। इति।

Sāyana has failed in his exposition of this passage which relates to observational astronomy, and no one who is unacquainted with this branch of science can possibly bring out any sense

[1] *Aitareya Brahmana*, 18, 18, quoted by S B Diksita in his भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र, p 47

of it We follow Keith generally with some modifications in the translation which is given below

'They perform the *Ekavimsa* day, the *Visuvān*, in the middle of the year, by this *Ekavimśa* day the gods raised up the sun towards the world of heaven (the highest region of the heavens, *viz*, the zenith) For this reason this sun (as raised up) is (called) *Ekavimśa*, Of this *Ekavimśa* sun (or the day), the ten days before are ordained for the hymns to be chanted during the day, the ten days after are also ordained in the same way, in the middle lies the *Ekavimśa* established on both sides in the *Virāj* (a period of ten days) It is certainly established in the *Virāj* Therefore he going between (the two periods of 10 days) over these worlds, does not waver'

'The gods were afraid of this *Āditya* (the sun) falling from this world of heaven (the highest place in the heavens), him with three worlds (diurnal circles) of heaven (in the heavens) from below they propped up, the *Stomas* are the three worlds of heaven (diurnal circles in the heavens) They were also afraid of his falling away upward, him with three worlds of heaven (diurnal circles in the heavens) form above they propped up, the *Stomas* are the three worlds of heaven (diurnal circles in the heavens) indeed Thus three below are the *saptadaśas* (seventeen), three above, in the middle is the *Ekavimśa* on both sides supported by *Svarasāmans* Therefore he going between these *Svarasāmans* over these worlds does not waver'

The Vedic year-long sacrifices were begun in the earliest times on the day following the winter solstice Hence the *Visuvān* or the middle day of the year was the summer solstice day The above passage shows that the sun was observed by the Vedic Hindus to remain stationary, *i e*, without any change in the meridian zenith distance for 21 days near the summer solstice The argument was this that if the sun remained stationary for 21 days, he must have had 10 days of northerly motion, 10 days of southerly motion and the middle (eleventh) day was certainly the day of the summer solstice; hence the sun going over these worlds, in the interval between the two periods of 10 days on either side, did not 'waver' Thus from a rough observation,

the Vedic Hindu could find the real day of the summer or winter solstice.

The next passage from the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (not quoted) divides the *Virāj* of 10 days thus: 10=6+1+3, the first 6 days were set apart for a *Sadaha* period, followed by an *atirātra* or extra day and then came the three days of the three *Stomas* or *Svarasāmans*. The *atirātra* days before and after the solstice day were respectively styled *Abhijit* and *Viśvajit* days. It may thus be inferred that the Vedic Hindus by more accurate observation found later on that the sun remained stationary at the summer solstice for 7 and not 21 days.

Question may now be asked how could they observe that the sun remained stationary for 21 days and not for 23, 27, 29, or 31 days. This depended on the degree of accuracy of observation possible for the Vedic Hindus by their methods of measurement. They probably observed the noon shadow of a vertical pole.[1] If we assume that the observation was made at the latitude of Kurukṣetra (about 30° N) and when the obliquity of the ecliptic was about 24° 15′, and the height of the pole was taken equal to, say, 6 ft., then

(*a*) When the sun had a longitude of 80°, the length of the noon-shadow=7.44 in.

(*b*) When the sun had a longitude of 87°, the length of the noon-shadow=6.98 in.

(*c*) When the sun had a longitude of 90°, the length of the noon-shadow=6.93 in.

Now 7.44 in. − 6.93 in. =0.51 in. and 6.98 in. − 6.93 in. =0.05 in.

Hence by using any sort of measuring rods, they could perhaps easily discern a change in the noon-shadow of about half an inch, but a difference of .05 in. was, of course, quite impossible of perception with them. They could thus infer that the sun remained stationary at the summer solstice for 7 days when they used any measuring rods and when they used rougher

[1] Another method possible for the Vedic people was to observe the sun's amplitude near about the S. Solstice day, and this was found to remain stationary for 21 days.

methods they could conclude that the sun remained stationary for 21 days at the summer solstice

At the winter solstice, the corresponding lengths of the noon-shadow would be 8 ft 3 46 in, 8 ft 4 84 in and 8 ft 4 94 in respectively The changes in the length of the shadow were consequently 1 38 in and 0 10 in respectively

It should thus be clear that the Vedic Hindus knew how to determine the summer or the winter solstice day When they found that the sun apparently remained stationary at the solstice for 21 days, the true solstice day was the 11th and when they found that the sun remained stationary for 7 days, they took the 4th day as the real solstice day [1]

This finishes the first part of this chapter We now pass on to consider how the Vedic Hindu stated his day of the winter solstice in successive ages Some of these statements are the following —

(*a*) The sun turned north on the new-moon of *Māgha* ended
(*b*) ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, last quarter of *Māgha*
(*c*) ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, full-moon of *Māgha*
(*d*) ,, ,, ,, ,, one day before full-moon of *Māgha*
(*e*) ,, , ,, ,, on the new-moon of *Māgha* begun

[1] The other method of determining the solstice day is described in *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* of Varāhamihira Chap III, 3 —

दूरस्थचिह्नवेधादुदयेऽस्तमयेऽपि वा सहस्रांशोः ।
छायाप्रवेशनिर्गमचिह्नैर्वा मण्डले महति ॥३॥

'The solstice day may be determined by observing the coincidence of the sun at the time of rising or setting with a distant sign post or by the marks of entrance or exit of the tip of the shadow of a gnomon in a large horizontal circle (having for its centre the foot of the gnomon)' Here two methods are described by Varāhamihira in the first of which the sun's amplitude at sunrise or sunset is to be observed If the Vedic Hindus followed this method, they could perhaps observe the sun to remain stationary, *i e*, without any appreciable change of amplitude, for 21 days near the solstices It does not appear probable that the second method was followed by the Vedic Hindus In this connection the method followed by the Druids of the ancient Britons, with their *cromlechs* (stone circles) as are seen in the Salisbury plains in England, for determining the solstice days may be compared The first method described by Varāhamihira readily led to the observation of the heliacal rising of stars in different seasons as has been found in the *Vedas*

As we shall see later on, these statements as to the day of the winter solstice occur in Vedic literature The month of *Māgha* (lunar) may begin now-a-days from the 15th of January to the 11th of February What then is the meaning of this month of *Māgha* as referred to in the above statements? Why should the sun's turning north be connected with a particular phase of the moon of such a movable month ? Unless and until we can answer the above questions satisfactorily, we cannot hope to interpret any of the above statements

We have very carefully considered the above questions and we may state our finding in the following way

The Vedic Hindus did not have a sidereal reckoning of the year , they followed a reckoning by lunar months of which 12 or 13 formed the year , in their reckoning the month of *Māgha*, as it came every year, did not begin in the same part of the sidereal or the tropical year as it does not begin now also If they had in use a sidereal calendar, they could state the solstice days by exact days of such a calendar Unfortunately this they had not They found out a particular lunar month of *Māgha* (not occurring every year) to fix the beginning or the end of the five-yearly luni-solar Vedic cycle, and they stated the solstice days in reference to the phase of the moon of such a month of *Māgha* The winter solstice day was the beginning of the Vedic five-yearly cycles or *Yugas* and *Sāmvatsara* or year-long Vedic sacrifices were begun in the earliest times also from the day of the winter solstice It is thus necessary for us to find the true meaning of this peculiar month of *Māgha* how it began and what were its characteristics

Meaning of the Month of Māgha for Vedic Cycles

As to the beginning of the month of *Māgha* which was used for starting the Vedic five-yearly cycles the *Jyautisa Vedāmgas* (1400 B C) say

स्वराक्रमेते सोमार्कौ यदा साकं सवासवौ ।
स्यात् तदादियुगं माघस्तपः शुक्लोऽयनं ह्युदक् ॥६॥

' When the sun, the moon and the *Dhanisthās* (*Delphinus*) ascend the heaven together, it is the beginning of the *Yuga* (*i e* ,

five-yearly luni-solar cycle), of the month of *Māgha* or *Tapas* of the light half and of *the sun's northerly course*' Hence this month of *Māgha* as used for starting the Vedic cycles must begin with the new-moon at *Delphinis* In the *Jyautisa Vedāmga* time the day of the very beginning of a such a *Māgha* was the day of the winter solstice and thus it marked the beginning of the tropical month of *Tapas*, the first of winter

As to the time when the use of this month of *Māgha* was accepted for making the Vedic calendar, we have the following passage from the *Mahābhārata*

'अभिजित् स्पर्द्धमाना तु रोहिण्याः कन्यसी स्वसा ।
इच्छन्ती ज्येष्ठता तात तपस्तप्तुं वनं गता ॥
तत्र मूढोऽस्मि भद्रं ते नक्षत्रं गगनाच्च्युतम् ।
कालं त्विमं परं स्कन्द ब्रह्मणा सह चिन्तय ॥
धनिष्ठादिस्तदा कालो ब्रह्मणा परिकल्पितः ।
रोहिणी ह्यभवत् पूर्वम् एवं सङ्ख्या समाऽभवत् ॥
एवमुक्ते तु शक्रेण कृत्तिकास्त्रिदिवं गताः ।
नक्षत्रं सप्तशीर्षाभं भाति तद्वह्निदैवतम् ॥

M Bh , *Vana*, 230, 8-11

"Lady *Abhijit* (i e , α*Lyra*), the younger sister of *Rohinī*, being jealous of her, has gone to the forest to perform austerities with the desire of attaining the position of the elder I am thus confounded at this incident as one *naksatra* has been deflected from heavens Hence O Skanda, please find this time in consultation with Brahmā" Then Brahmā fixed the time, beginning from the *Dhanisthās*, and *Rohinī* (α *Tauri* or *Aldebaran*) became the first star In this way the number of *naksatras* became proper (*Sama*) When Indra thus spoke to Skanda, the *Krttikās* flew to the heavens as the *naksatra* (star group) with seven heads, as it were, and it still shines as the one of which the presiding deity is *Agni* (Fire) '

The passage quoted above shows that it was Brahmā, a person of very high antiquity whose name was forgotten, who started the reckoning of time from the new-moon at the *Delphinis*, when *Rohinī* became the first star, and the *Krttikās* rose very probably exactly at the east Here we have the time when the Vedic

five-yearly luni-solar cycles came to be started with reference to the month of *Māgha*

Now in Vedic literature *Rohiṇī* means two stars, *viz*, *Rohiṇī* proper (*Aldebaran*) or *Jyeṣṭhā* (*Antares*)[1] For 1931 A D their longitudes were 68° 49′ and 248° 48′ according to our calculation.[2] Hence these stars differ in longitude by almost 180° degrees, and had respectively the longitudes of 0° and 180° at about **3050 B C**[3]

This was the approximate date when the month of Māgha with its beginning with a new-moon at Delphinis was agreed upon as the standard month with reference to which the five-yearly Vedic luni-solar cycles were started and intercalary months were determined. It was about this time that the number of *nakṣatras* (lunar mansions) was fixed at 27 by rejecting *Abhijit* (*α Lyræ*). It is here not necessary for us to attempt an explanation of the rivalry between either of the *Rohiṇīs* and *Abhijit*

We have up to now settled that one feature of this standard month of *Māgha* was that it should begin with a new-moon near the *Delphinis* Another feature which follows from this is that it should have the full-moon near the star *Maghā* or *Regulus*, as the moon takes about 14 7 days, at the mean rate, to pass from *β Delphinis* to *α Leonis* or *Maghā*

The third feature of this standard month of *Māgha* was that at its last quarter (*aṣṭakā*), the moon should be conjoined with *Jyeṣṭhā* or *Antāres* as the *Āpastamba Gṛhya Sūtra* says[4]

या माघ्याः पौर्णमास्या उपरिष्टाद् व्यष्टका तस्याष्टमी ज्येष्ठया सम्पद्यते तामेकाष्टकेत्याचक्षते ।

[1] *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, 4, 4, 10

[2] According to Burgess these stars had the celestial longitudes of 49° 45′ and 229° 44′ in 560 A D Translation of the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, Calcutta University Reprint, p 243

[3] The conjunction of *Aldebaran* with the full moon could perhaps only be observed by their simultaneous meridian passages on the equinoxial day in the Vedic times The celestial pole of the time was very near to *α Draconis* The other possible method of observing the conjunction of the full moon with *Aldebaran* on the equinoxial day was by joining the pole star with the moon and Aldebaran In both these methods it was the R A which was really taken equal to Zero, and the date for that comes out to be 3233 B C

[4] *Āpastamba Gṛhya Sūtra* viii, 81, 19

'The *Vyastakā* which comes after the full-moon at *Maghā* (*Regulus*), has its eighth day (of the dark half) or last quarter with the moon at the star *Jyesthā* or *Antares*, that is called *Ekāstakā*'

The moon takes at the mean rate 7 545 days or roughly a quarter of a synodic month to pass from *Regulus* to *Antares*

Thus we come to the conclusion that the Vedic standard month of *Māgha*, in reference to which the Vedic five-yearly luni-solar cycles were started and winter solstice days in successive ages were determined and stated, had three characters, *viz*, (1) New-moon at *Delphinis*, (2) Full-moon at *Regulus*, and (3) Last quarter at *Antares* This month of *Māgha* did not and also does not come every year We shall henceforth call this month the *Vedic Standard month of Māgha*

The Vedic Standard Month of Māgha in Present Times

We can now ascertain how and when such a standard *Māgha* occurred or may occur in our own times For 1931 A D, *β Delphinis* had a longitude of 315° 23′, *α Leonis* 148° 53′, *α Scorpionis* or *Antares* 248° 48′ nearly Hence this standard month of *Māgha* should begin about the 5th February, should have the full-moon about the 18th February, and the last quarter about the 28th February If we look for such a month coming in our own times, we had it as shown below —

Year	Beginning New moon	Full moon	Last quarter	Ending New moon
1924	Feb 5	Feb 20	Feb 27	Mar 5
1927	Feb 2	Feb 16	Feb 24	Mar 3
1932	Feb 6	Feb 22	Feb 28	Mar 7
1935	Feb 3	Feb 18	Feb 26	Mar 5

The Vedic standard month of *Māgha* is thus not strictly unique in its position in the sidereal year All points considered we are inclined to take that this *Māgha* happened in our time in 1924 A D from the 5th February till the 5th March This year and this month we shall use as our gauge year and month

in interpreting the different statements of the days of the winter solstice as occurring in Vedic literature [1]

(ii) *Statements of Solstice Days in Vedic Literature*

We are now going to state and explain the references from the *Brāhmanas* and other works which either directly state or indicate the winter solstice day of the successive Vedic periods

(A) The first reference is from the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*, and it was first found by Weber

स वै माघस्यामावस्यायामुपवसत्युदङ्डावर्त्स्यन्नुपेमे वसन्ति प्रायणीयेनातिरात्रेण यक्ष्यमाणास्तदेनं प्रथममाप्नुवन्ति त चतुर्विंशेनारभन्ते तदारम्भणीयस्यारम्भणीयत्वं स षण्मासानुदङ्ङेति तमूर्ध्वैः षड्हैरनुयन्ति स षण्माषानुदङ्डित्वा तिष्ठते दक्षिणावर्त्स्यन्नुपेमे वसन्ति वैषुवतीयेनाह्ना यक्ष्यमाणास्तदेनं द्वितीयमाप्नुवन्ति स षण्मासान् दक्षिणैति तमावृत्तैः षड्हैः अनुयन्ति स षण्मासान् दक्षिणेत्वा तिष्ठते उदङ्डावर्त्स्यन्नुपेमे महाव्रतीयेनाह्ना यक्ष्यमाणास्तदेनं तृतीयमाप्नुवन्ति तं यत्त्रिराप्नुवन्ति त्रेधाविहितो वै संवत्सरः संवत्सरस्यैवाप्त्यै तद्वतैषाऽपि यज्ञगाथा गीयते।

अहोरात्राणि विदधद् ऊर्णा वा इव धीर्यः
षण्माषा दक्षिणा नित्यः षडुदङ्ङेति सूर्य्यः।

इति षड्ढ्येष उदङ्मासानेति षड् दक्षिणा तद्धै न तस्मिन् काले दीक्षेरण्णनागतं सस्यं भवति दहरकाण्यहानि भवन्ति संवेपमाना अवभृथादुदायन्ति तस्मादत्र न दीक्षेरं-श्चैत्रस्यामावस्याया एकाह उपरिष्टाद् दीक्षेरन् आगतं सस्य भवति महान्त्यहानि भवन्त्य-संवेपमाना अवभृथादुदायन्ति तस्मादेतत् स्थितम्[1]।

This passage has thus been translated by Keith in his *Rg-Veda Brāhmanas*

'On the new-moon of *Māgha* he rests, being about to turn northwards, these also rest, being about to sacrifice with the introductory *atirātra*, thus for the first time they obtain him, on him they lay hold with the *caturvimśa*, that is why the

[1] The year 1924 A D is also similar to the year 80 A D of which the 1st day of *Māgha* was the epoch of the *Paitāmaha Siddhānta* of the *Pañcasiddhāntikā* of Varāhamihira The interval of 1844 sidereal years=673532 73 da and 22808 lunations =673533 65 da The difference is only about 1 day,

[2] *Kausītaki Brāhmana*, xix, 3

laying hold has its name He goes north for six months, him they follow with six-day periods in forward arrangement Having gone for six months he stands still, being about to turn southwards, these also rest, being about to sacrifice with the *Visuvant* day, thus for the second time they obtain him He goes south for six months, they follow him with six-day periods in reverse order Having gone south for six months he stands still, and they about to sacrifice with the *Mahāvrata* day obtain him for the third time In that they obtain him thrice, the year is in three ways arranged Verily it serves to obtain the year With regard to this, this sacrificial verse is sung,

> Ordaining the days and nights,
> Like a cunning spider,
> For six months south constantly,
> For six north the sun goeth

For six months he goes north, six south They should not consecrate themselves at this time, the corn has not arrived, the days are short, shivering they come out from the final bath (*avabhrtha*) Therefore they should not consecrate themselves at this time They should consecrate themselves one day after the new-moon of *Caitra*, the corn has come, the days are long, not shivering they come out from the final bath Therefore that is the rule'

Here it is definitely stated that on the the new-moon of *Māgha* the sun reached the winter solstice [1] This new-moon is without any doubt that new-moon with which *Māgha* ended The definition or meaning of this month of *Māgha* has been found before This statement shows that the 5th of March, 1924 A D, was the true anniversary of this determination of the winter solstice Now on the 5th March, 1924, G M noon, the sun's mean longitude was

$$= 342° \, 57' \, 46''$$
$$= 342° \, 58' \quad \text{to the nearest minute}$$

This longitude was near to 270° in the year of this determination of the solstice day It shows a shifting of the solstices by

[1] This is perhaps the oldest tradition of the solstice day as recorded in this *Brāhmana*

about 72° 58′, representing a lapse of about 5,268 years, till 1924 A D But we have yet to allow for the sun's equation Now in 52 44 centuries before 1900 A D, the longitude of the sun's apogee was = 11° 30′ nearly and the eccentricity of the solar orbit was about 018951 Hence the sun's equation for the mean longitude of 270° was, + 2° 8′ nearly

This equation of + 2° 8′ is now applied to the mean longitude of the sun on the 5th March, 1924, at G M noon, *viz*, 342° 58′ The result obtained, *viz*, 345° 6′, was equal to 270° in the year of this determination of the winter solstice day Hence the total shifting of the solstices becomes 75° 6′ nearly, this indicates a lapse of 5,444 years till 1924 A D, or the date of this determination of the solstice becomes near to 3521 B C Now as we want the year similar to 1924 A D as regards the moon's phases in relation to the fixed stars, the date arrived at requires a little adjustment We have already obtained[1] the luni-solar cycles of 8, 19, 160, 1939, etc, years in which the moon's phases near to fixed stars repeat themselves

Now $5444 = (1939 \times 2 + 160 \times 9 + 19 \times 6 + 8) + 4$ Hence elapsed years must now be taken as 5440 from which the required year comes out to be **3517 B C**

The sun then turned north in 3517 B C on the new-moon day of *Māgha* and the first year of the luni-solar cycle commenced from the said new-moon day The question now is, 'how could they find the next winter solstice day' They counted full 366 days or 12 months and 12 nights after which they estimated that the sun would reach the winter solstice This sort of reckoning continued till the five-yearly cycle of 62 lunar months was exhausted They then thought that the same type of *Māgha* returned, or they might check their reckoning in 3, 5, 8, 11 or 19 years by actual observation Hence their predicted day of the winter solstice, when not checked by actual observation, was almost always in error, but perhaps was still within their limit of 21 days Their observed solstice days, however, were always correct

It may be asked how the Vedic year came to have 366 days or 12 lunar months + 12 nights Generally this year is stated

[1] Chapter I, p 27

in many places to consist of 360 days only. How is this discrepancy to be explained? In a half year there were the ordinary 180 days + 2 *atirātra* days, then came the *Visuvān*, the middle day of the year which belonged to neither half and then came the other half with 180 days + 2 *atirātra* days and lastly came the *Mahāvrata* day. In all, therefore, there were in the year 2(180+2)+2 or 366 days. Of the two *atirātras* of the northerly course, the first was the *Prāyanīya* and the second the *Abhijit* day. Similarly in the sun's southerly course, the first *atirātra* day was the *Viśvajit* day and the other had a suitable name. The Vedic year had thus 366 days or 12 lunations + 12 'nights'.[1]

One point more we want to settle is that when the Vedic year was taken to begin. The answer is now easy. The Vedic year normally began on the day following the winter solstice, and winter then began and lasted for two months. Winter was thus the first season of the year. There was next felt the difficulty of beginning the year-long sacrifices with the winter solstice day, as the time was unsuitable on the ground of its being extremely cold, as it was the non-harvesting time and as the days were then very short. Then rule was made to begin these sacrifices, not from the winter solstice day but full two months and one day or exactly 60 days later, when spring set in, or as the text says, 'One day after the new moon of *Caitra*. Thus the first season, though winter formerly, became spring in later reckoning (sacrificial year) and winter then became the last season of the year.

We have found out the year when the sun turned north on the new-moon of *Māgha* to have been 3517 B C by taking the standard month of *Māgha* as the one which happened from the 5th of February till the 5th of March, 1924 A D. Our date is

[1] *Cf* त्रिशत्यह्ना सषट्षष्टिरब्दो पञ्चर्तवोऽयने ।

Yājuṣa Jyautiṣa 28

"A year is three hundred with sixty six of days. In it there are five seasons and two courses (of the sun)."

In this connection it should be remembered that the *atirātra* days were not reckoned in the sacrificial calendar.

perhaps liable to shifting of about one or two centuries either way if we took the gauge year to be 1927 or 1932 A D This amount of possible shifting must be considered negligible at such a remote age It is perhaps needless to point out that unless we can find out a correct interpretation of passages like above, no determination of time would be possible

A question may yet be raised, if of the phrase 'the new-moon of *Māgha*,' the word *Māgha* means the full-moon ending month of *Māgha* Our answer is that we have taken the month of *Māgha* as the new-moon ending not without any reason In the *Jyautisa Vedāmgas* we get the new-moon ending months alone, not a single verse in them can be interpreted to mean the full-moon ending months In the case of the new-moon ending *Māgha*, we have established three distinctive peculiarities as already pointed out and that such a month of *Māgha* was associated with the winter solstice day and the starting of the Vedic five-yearly cycle or *Yuga* The word *Māgha* as used in connection with the solstice days must have a definite meaning, *i e*, must mean more or less a unique synodic month not occurring every year As to the full-moon ending *Māgha*, we have not yet discovered any unique meaning either from the *Jyautisa Vedāmgas* or from other Vedic literature Thus while we are so much in doubt as to the characters of a unique full-moon ending month of *Māgha*, the characters of the new-moon ending *Māgha* are very clear and well-pronounced We thus consider it fruitless to speculate upon the characters of a Vedic full-moon ending unique *Māgha* to interpret the references like the above [1] We now pass on to our next reference

(B) This reference was quoted by Tilak in his '*Orion*' on pp 44-45 and runs as follows [2]

सवत्सराय दीक्षिष्यमाणा एकाष्टकायां दीक्षेरन्नेषा वै सवत्सरस्य पत्नी यदेकाष्टकै- तस्यां वा एष एतां रात्रिं वसति साक्षादेव संवत्सरमारभ्य दोक्षंत आर्त्तं वा एते सवत्सरस्याभिदीक्षते य एकाष्टकायां दीक्षते अन्तनामावृतू भवतः व्यस्तम् एते सवत्सर- स्याभिदीक्षते य एकाष्टकायां दीक्षते अन्तनामावृतू भवत· फल्गुनो पूर्णमासे दीक्षेरन्

[1] Further the full moon ending *Māgha* cannot include the F... before This is a serious defect of the full moon ending month

[2] *Taittirīya Samhitā*, VII, 4, 8, also *Tāndya* ...

मुखं वा एतत् संवत्सरस्य यत् फल्गुनी पूर्णमासो मुखत एव संवत्सरमारभ्य दीक्षते तस्यैकैव निर्या यत् साम्मेघ्ये विषुवान् सम्पद्यते चित्रापूर्णमासे दीक्षेरन् मुखं वा एतत् संवत्सरस्य यच्चित्रापूर्णमासो मुखत एव संवत्सरमारभ्य दीक्षंते तस्य न काचन निर्य्या भवति चतुरहे पुरस्तात् पौर्णमास्यै दीक्षेरन् तेषामेकाष्टकाया क्रयः सम्पद्यते तेनैकाष्टकां न छंवट् कुर्व्वन्ति तेषा पूर्व्वपक्षे सुत्या सम्पद्यते पूर्व्वपक्ष मासा अभिसम्पद्यन्ते ते पूर्व्वपक्ष उत्तिष्ठन्ति तानुत्तिष्ठत औषधयो वनस्पतयोऽनुतिष्ठन्ति तान् कल्याणी कीर्त्तिरनुत्तिष्ठत्या-रत्सुरिमे यजमाना इति तदनु सर्व्वे राध्नुवन्ति ॥

This passage is from the *Taittirīya Samhitā* The *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* has also almost the same passage with slight alterations as may be seen from Tilak's quotation in his '*Orion*' We translate the above passage following him generally thus

'Those who want to consecrate themselves for the yearly (year-long) sacrifice should do so on the *Ekāstakā* day This is the wife of the year what is called *Ekāstakā* and he, the year, lives in her for this night Those that consecrate on the *Ekāstakā* truly do so in a distressed condition, as it is the season (winter) which is reckoned the last of the year Thus those that consecrate on the *Ekāstakā* do so in the reversed order as it marks the last season of the year They should consecrate on the full-moon at the *Phalgus* as it is the mouth of the year They thus begin the yearly (year-long) sacrifices from the very mouth, but it has one defect that the *Visuvān* (the middle day of the year) falls in the rainy season They should consecrate themselves at the full-moon near *Citrā* (*Spica* or *a Virginis*), as it is the beginning of the year They thus begin the sacrifice from the very mouth of the year Of this time there is no fault whatsoever They should consecrate themselves four days before the full-moon (near *Citrā*) Then *Kraya* (*i e*, purchase of Soma) falls on the *Ekāstakā* (here the last quarter of *Caitra*) Thereby they do not render the *Ekāstakā* void (*i e*, of no consequence)) Their *Sutyā* (*i e*, extraction of Soma juice) falls in the first (light) half of the month Their months (monthly sacrifices) fall in the first half They rise (finish) in the first half On their rising, herbs and plants rise after them After them rises the good fame that these sacrificers have prospered Thereon all prosper'

The *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* here records three days of the winter solstice, the first two of which were traditional and the last one most likely belonged to the date of this book. These are

(1) The Day of *Ekāstakā*
(2) The Day of the full-moon at the *Phalgus*
(3) The Day preceding the full-moon of *Māgha*

As in the *Kausītaki Brāhmana* here is expressed a dislike for beginning the yearly sacrifices with the beginning of winter Some centuries later than the tradition recorded in the *Kausītaki Brāhmana,* it was observed that the winter solstice had preceded by nearly 8 days and fell on the *Ekāstakā* day, i e, on the day of the last quarter, of the Standard month of *Māgha* on which the moon was conjoined with *Antares* This day corresponded with the 27th February of 1924 A D of our time Hence the date for this position of the winter solstice as obtained by observation comes out to have been **2934 B C**

It was about this time taken as a rule that the year-long sacrifices should be begun from the day of *Ekāstakā* But as this was the beginning of winter, it was considered unsuitable for the purpose chiefly owing to the extreme cold nature of the season which made the sacrificer shiver on coming out of the water after the bath of *avabhrtha* People then came to think that the yearly sacrifices should be begun according to an older tradition, *viz*, that the day of the full-moon night near tho *Phalgus* was the first day of the year This day had been the day of the winter solstice many centuries before the time The time when this was the position of the solstices was about 4550 B C We cannot be sure if at this high antiquity there was anything like the standard month of *Māgha* agreed upon

[1] The *Pūrva Mīmāmsā,* quotes the following traditional days for the *Gavāmayana* sacrifices —

Full moon days of *Māgha* or of *Caitra*, or the *Ekāstakā* The *Sūtras* are

पौर्णमास्यामनियमोऽविशेषात् ॥३०॥ आनन्तर्य्यात् तु चैत्रीस्यात् ॥३१॥ माघी वैकाष्टकाश्रुते॰ ॥३२॥

Pūrva Mīmāmsā, VI, 5, 30-32,

The commentator Śavara quotes the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* and the *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* for elucidation

But the sacrificers who thought that the *Ekāstakā* day was unsuitable for beginning the yearly sacrifices, calculated that the full-moon at the *Phalgus* would happen ¾th of a month or 22 days later, and that the middle day of the year would happen 22 days after the sun crossed the summer solstice—a day which was almost at the middle of the rainy season Hence if they began the yearly (year-long) sacrifices at the beginning of spring *i e* , full two solar months or two lunar (synodic) months *plus* one day later, the *Visuvān* or the middle day of the sacrificial year would be the first day of autumn and there would be no inconvenience due to rainy weather on that day

When the sun reached the winter solstice on the day of the last quarter of the standard month of *Māgha*, spring would begin full two synodic months *plus* one day later , consequently the day most suitable for beginning the yearly sacrifices would be the day following the *Caitrī Ekāstakā* or the last quarter of *Caitra* In its place the *Taittirīya Samhitā* recommends that yearly (year-long) sacrifices should be begun from the full-moon day of *Caitra* or *Citrā Paurnamāsī* day This being the beginning of spring, the winter solstice day was one day before the full-moon day of the standard month of *Māgha*

This full-moon day of *Māgha* corresponded with the 20th February, 1924 A D , and the year in which the winter solstice day fell on the full-moon day of *Māgha* was 2454 B C [1] The time indicated by the rule of the *Taittirīya Samhitā* becomes about **2446 B C** Judged by this latest tradition recorded in it, the date of the *Taittirīya Samhitā* should be about 2446 B C The other two traditions which it contains were true for about 4550 B C and 2934 B C respectively, of which the former is of doubtful value

(c) In the *Mahābhārata* there are several passages which directly or indirectly indicate that the nights of the full moons at the *Krttikās* and the *Maghās*, were respectively the autumnal

[1] Eight years after 2454 B C , the full moon of *Māgha* fell one day later than the winter solstice day In our finding this year, *viz* , 2446 B C was the year in which Yudhisthira began the *Asvamedha* sacrifice This has been fully discussed on page 32

equinox and the winter solstice days and thus particularly auspicious for the performance of some religious observances

(1) कार्त्तिकीं तु विशेषेण योऽभिगच्छति पुष्करम् ।
प्राप्नुयात् स नरो लोकान् ब्रह्मणः सदनेऽक्षयान् ॥[1]

'The man who goes to Puskara specially at the full-moon at the *Krttikās*, gets the blessed worlds for all times at the house of Brahmā '

(2) कृत्तिकामघयोश्चैव तीर्थमासाद्य भारत ।
अग्निष्टोमातिरात्राभ्यां फलमाप्नोति मानवः ॥[2]

' A person reaching a holy bathing place at full-moons at the *Krttikās (Pleiades)* and the *Maghās* (*Regulus*), etc gets the merit of having performed respectively the *Agnistoma* and the *Atirātra* sacrifices '

Here it is significant that the difference in celestial longitudes of *Pleiades* and *Regulus* is very nearly equal to 90 degrees

(3) दशतीर्थसहस्राणि तिस्रः कोट्यस्तथापरा ।
समागच्छन्ति माघ्यां तु प्रयागे भरतर्षभ ॥[3]

' At Prayāga (the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna) at the full-moon at the *Maghās*, three crores and ten thousand holy waters meet '

(4) उर्वशीं कृत्तिकायोगे गत्वा चैव समाहितः ।
लौहित्ये विधिवत् स्नात्वा पुण्डरीकफलं लभेत् ॥[4]

'On the full-moon at *Krttikās*, if a man should go to the bathing place called Ūrvaśī and bathe in the Lauhitya (the river Brahmaputra), according to Śāstric rules with a devoted or prayerful mind, he would get the religious merit of having performed the *Pundarīka* sacrifice '

1 M Bh , *Vana*, 82 31 32
2 M Bh , *Vana*, 84, 51 52
3 M Bh , *Anusāsana*, 25, 35 36
M Bh , *Anuśāsana*, 25, 46

We have already ascertained the time when the full-moon day of the standard month of *Māgha* was also the winter solstice day, it was the the year *2454* B C [1] The Mahābhārata references quoted above show that the old observers could ascertain that at this time the vernal equinox was near to the *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*) and the summer solstice at the *Maghās* (or near to the star *Regulus*) This position of the equinoxes and the solstices was perhaps regarded as correct till up to 2350 B C

(D) We now come to a different sort of statement, not connected with the month of *Māgha*, from the *Brāhmanas* as to the beginning of the year expressed in terms of the fullness of the moon near to the *Phalgus*

अथातश्चातुर्म्मास्यानां। चातुर्म्मास्यानि प्रयुञ्जान· फाल्गुन्यां पौर्णमास्यां प्रयुंक्ते। मुख वा एतत् सम्वत्सरस्य यत् फाल्गुनी पौर्णमासी मुखमुत्तरे पुच्छं पूर्व्वे तद् यथा प्रवृत्तस्यान्तौ समेतौ स्यातामेवमेतौ संवत्सरस्यान्तौ समेतौ।[2]

"Next as to the four-monthly sacrifices He who prepares for the four-monthly sacrifices, begins on the full-moon night of the *Phalgunis* The full-moon night of the *Phalgunīs* is the beginning of the year, the latter two (*uttare*) *Phalgus* are the beginning and the former two (*Pūrve*) the end (*i e*, *puccha* or the tail) Just as the two ends of what is round (*viz*, the circle) may unite, so these two ends of the year are connected '—(Keith)

We proceed to find the time indicated by the above passage on the hypothesis that this reference states the day of winter solstice and not the beginning of spring

Solsticial Point and Deduced Date

to settle the exact indication of the winter n the above *Brāhmanas* reference The full- *halgus* was the last night of the year, while *Uttara Phalgus* the first night of the next

ita, Kaliyuga, pp 10 12

Yu ', 1

page 5.

year If we take the meaning that the sun reached the winter solstice at the full-moon at the *Pūrva Phalgus*, from such references, we arrive at the year 3293 B C On the other hand, if we take that the sun in opposition to *β Leonis* marked the winter solstice, the date comes out to be 3980 B C Here is produced a difference of about 700 years

Now the *Vedic* full-moon nights were not *one* but *two* in a lunar month, the first of which was the *Anumati Paurnamāsī* and the second was the *Rākā Paurnamāsī*[1] These two full-moon nights were consecutive Hence we should take the full-moon occurring somewhere midway between the stars *θ* and *β Leonis* as indicative of the winter solstice day of this *Brāhmana* period.

Now the celestial longitude of *θ Leonis* for 1931 A D

$=162° \ 24'$

and the celestial longitude of *β Leonis* for 1931 A D

$=170° \ 41'$

The mean of the longitudes of these stars for 1931 A D

$=166° \ 32'$

Now on the 6th March, 1928, a full-moon happened at 12 hrs 34 min G M T and the sun at G M noon had the longitude of 345° 40′ nearly From which the total shifting of the solstices becomes 75° 40′ as a first approximation The date comes out to be about 3550 B C, which we understand to be earliest date for the inception of *Brāhmana* literature as deduced from the above statement

If the full-moon day of *Phālguna* be distinctly indicated as the beginning of Indian spring, in any of the *Brāhmanas*, the work in question must belong to a date of which the superior limit would go down to about 625 B C as will be set forth later on

Conclusion

We have thus shown from the direct statements as found in the *Brāhmanas*, that the beginning of this class of literature and of the religious ceremonies prescribed in them began from

[1] *Aitareya Brāhmana*, xxvii, 11, etc.

about 3550 B C The actual dates arrived at are tabulated below

Date arrived at (approximate)	Reference or basis of date	Gauge year and date correct to W S Day
3550 B C	(D)	1928 A D 6th March
3517 B C	(A)	1924 A D 5th March
2934 B C	(B)	,, ,, 27th Feb
2454 B C to 2350 B C	(C)	,, ,, 20th Feb

The above dates indicated in the *Brāhmanas*, cannot be all classed as mere traditions The year of the Bhārata battle falls within this range and was the year 2449 B C as has been established in Chapters I-III

As to the references which use the month of *Māgha* for stating the solstice days, the gauge year could as well be 1927 A D , and we cannot say if the Vedic Hindus did not sometimes use the type of *Māgha* which happened this year. This would tend to lower some of the dates as connected with *Māgha* by about 200 years The reference (A) would indicate the date 3308 B C nearly 'when *Rohini* became the first star '[1]

This chapter is divided into two parts, in the first of which we have shown that the Vedic Hindus knew of a method of finding the solstice day of either description of any year In the second half we have established that there was a standard month of *Māgha* in their statements of the solstice days in successive ages, and we have found out a set of dates extending from 3550 B C to 2350 B C during which some sort of Sanskrit literature known as the *Brāhmanas* began to be formed.

[1] *M Bh , Vana*, 230, 8 11, quoted before

CHAPTER XIV

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

Solar Eclipse in the Tāndya Brāhmana

As noticed by late Śankara Bālakṛsna Dīksita, in his **भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र**, page 63 (1st edn), there are references to solar eclipses in five places in the *Tāndya Brāhmana* which are (1) IV, 5, 2, (2) IV, 6, 13, (3) VI, 6, 8, (4) XIV, 11, 14-15, and (5) xxiii, 16, 2 In all these references it is stated that *Svarbhānu* struck the sun with darkness Of these five references, in the two, *viz*, VI, 6, 8 and XIV, 11, 14-15, it is said that it was Atri who destroyed the darkness from the front of the sun, in the remaining three references the removal of darkness from the sun is ascribed to the *Devas* or gods Dīksita would take the word '*Devas*' to mean the "sun's rays" Whatever the meaning of the word '*Devas*' may be, it is clear that the references which speak of Atri as the person who dispelled the darkness that lay on the sun's disc, speak of the solar eclipse as described in the *Rg-Veda*, V, 40, the time of which has been already ascertained in Chapter IX as the 26th July, 3928 B C It is proposed in the present chapter to determine the date of this another eclipse of the sun as mentioned in the *Tāndya Brāhmana*, and understood as such by Dīksita He had also found a reference to a solar eclipse in the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, V, 3, 2, 2 and which has been often quoted by subsequent writers The three references of the *Tāndya Brāhmana* as to this special eclipse are the following —

(a) "स्वर्भानुर्वा आसुरः आदित्यन्तमसाऽविध्यत्तं देवाः स्वरैरवस्पृण्वत् स्वरसामानो भवन्त्यादित्यस्य स्पृत्यै ।"

T Br IV, 5, 2

(b) स्वर्भानुर्वा आसुर' आदित्यन्तमसाविध्यत्तस्य देवा दिवाकीर्त्यै स्तमोऽपाघ्नन्

त्र्यानि भवन्ति तम एवास्मादपघ्नन्ति रश्मयो वा एत आदित्यस्य यद्दिवाकीर्त्यानि
व तदादित्यं साक्षादारभन्ते।

T Br, IX, 6 13

स्वर्भानुर्वा आसुरः सूर्यं तमसाऽविध्यत्तस्मै देवाः प्रायश्चित्तिमैच्छंस्त एता
ाभिरस्मात्तमोऽपाघ्नन्।

T Br, XXIII 16, 12

se passages may be tianslated as follows —

"Svaibhānu born of Asuia, stiuck the sun with darkness, was dispelled by the gods with *Svaras* (hymns), hence the *imans* aie foi the iescue of the sun"

"Svarbhānu, the Asura, stiuck the sun with daikness ds iemoved this darkness by singing the *Divākīrtya* songs ngs sung duiing the day time) Whatevei are known as *tyas*, are (the agents) foi the destiuction of daikness *Divākīrtya* songs are the rays of the sun By the rays he sun is tiuly begun"

"Svaibhānu, the Asuia, stiuck the sun with darkness, s the gods wanted to purify him and they got these *mans*; by these they iemoved the darkness fiom the sun"

se passages all indicate that the solar eclipse in question ed on the *Visuvant* day, which means according to the *ya Samhitā* as "the middle day of the sacrificial year from spring" It meant the day on which the Indian ided and the Indian autumn began To be more precise, it he day on which the sun's tropical longitude became 150° ng to the Vedic sacrificial calendar, there weie the thiee *man* days before the *Visuvant*, and thiee *Svarasāman* fter the *Visuvant* - On these seven days (including the *it*) the *Divākirtya* songs weie sung We thus infer that ar eclipse happened on the *Visuvant* day, *i e* on the day h the sun's tropical longitude was about 150° degrees

at is here said in the *Tāndya Brāhmana* about *such a r solar eclipse happening on the Visuvant day, must be a n of a past event only* By exploring the period from A D. to −1296 A D with the help of the eclipse cycles

deduced in Chapter IX on the "Solar Eclipse in the *Rgveda*, we find after a few trials that a solar eclipse took place in the year −2450 A D. on Sept. 14, on which at G M T 6 hrs or Kuruksetra Mean Time 11-8 A M, the lunisolar elements were

Mean Sun	=	152°	12′	22″ 35
,, Moon	=	148	32	16 30
Lunar Perigee	=	102	50	30 85
A Node	=	143	51	1 32
Sun's apogee	=	27	1	51 86

Sun's eccentricity = 0·018331

The full calculations of the circumstances of this solar eclipse are set forth in the Appendix. We briefly summarise them for the station Kuruksetra —

Date —September, 14, −2450 A D (*i e*, 2451 B C)
Longitude of conjunction of Sun and Moon = 150° 18′ nearly
Time of beginning of the solar eclipse = 5-27 A M, K M T
,, ,, ending ,, ,, ,, = 7-4 ,, ,,
,, ,, nearest approach of centres = 6 4 ,, ,,
Magnitude of the eclipse = 0 41 = 5 Indian units
Duration of eclipse = 1 hr 37 m
Time of Sunrise = 5-32 A M., K M. Time
The eclipse began almost with the sunrise

We have carefully examined the period from 2554 B C to 1297 B C and are satisfied that no other solar eclipse happened in this period with the sun's longitude at 150° nearly and which was visible at Kuruksetra

The *Tāndya Brāhmana* therefore records the solar eclipse on the *Visuvant* day in its references in IV, 5, 2, IV, 6, 13 and XXIII, 16, 12 It is not unlikely that the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* also in V, 3, 2, 2 records the same traditional eclipse We can not, however, by this finding settle if the *Tāndya Brāhmana* is to be dated earlier than the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*. It will be shown later on that the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana* and the *Tāndya Brāhmana* indicate a common date of about 1600 B C.

APPENDIX

Calculation of the Solar eclipse mentioned in the Tāndya Brāhmana

Date—September, 14—2450 A D (2451 B C)

Julian day No 826452

Epoch 6 A M , G M T , *i e* , Kuruksetra Mean Time 11-8 A M

(*i e* , 43·49 J C and 97 days before Jan 1 , 1900, G M Noon)

Mean Luni-solar elements

Mean Sun	=	152°	12′	22″ 35	
Mean Moon	=	148	32	16 30	
L Perigee	=	102	50	30 85	
A Node	=	143	51	1 32	
Sun's apogee	=	27	1	51 86	

Solar eccentricity = 0 018331

Let A represent the epoch 0 hr midnight G M T or 5 8 A M Kuruksetra time

B	,,	,,	,,	2	A M , G M T	or 7-8	,,	,,	
C	,,	,,	,,	4	,,	,,	,, 9-8	,,	,,

Mean Sun					*Mean Moon*				
At	A = 151°	57′	35″ 28		At	A = 145°	14′	37″ 54	
,,	B = 152	2	30 97		,,	B = 146	20	30 46	
,,	C = 152	7	26 66		,,	C = 147	26	23 38	

Moon's Perigee

At	A = 102°	48′	50″ 59
,,	B = 102	49	24 01
,,	C = 102	49	57 43

Sun's apogee = 27° 1′ 51 86

A Node

At	A = 143°	51′	48″·96
,,	B = 143	51	33 08
,,	C = 143	51	17 20

Sun's eccentricity (e) = 0 018331

($2e$) radians = 125′ 715 [2 0991901]

($\frac{5}{4}e^2$) radians = 1′ 437 [0 1575563]

Longitude of Sun

At A	At B	At C
= 151° 57′ 35	152° 2′ 31″	152° 7′ 27″
= −1 44 26	−1 44 20	−1 44 14
= 150° 13′ 9″	150° 18′ 11″	150° 23′ 13″

Longitude of Moon

At A	At B	At C
= 145 14 38	146 20 30	147 26 23
= +3 20 30	+3 27 55	+3 35 14
= 148 35 8	149 48 25	151 1 37
= 143 51 49	143 51 33	143 51 17
= 4° 43′ 19″	5° 56′ 52″	7° 10′ 20″
= 9° 26′ 38″	11 53 44	14 20 40
= — 1′ 8″	— 1′ 26	— 1′ 43″
= 148° 34′ 0″	149° 46′ 59″	150° 59′ 54″

moon = 8 3 Kurukṣetra Mean Time

Latitude of Moon

sin F₁ =	+1518″2	+1918″9	+2312″1
−2F) =	−105 1	−95 5	−86 0
−g′) =	−21 6	−21 9	−22 1
+g′) =	−18 3	−18·0	−17 6
−g) =	−14 2	−14 1	−[illegible]
−2g) =	+23 2	−23 8	[illegible]
} =	+15 2	[illegible]	
otal =	−1397 4	[illegible]	
ude =	[illegible]		

Moon's Horizontal Parallax

$$P = 3422''7 + 186\ 6 \cos g + 34\ 3 \cos (2D - g) + 28\ 3 \cos 2D$$

For 'B'

$$\begin{aligned} +\ 186\ 6 \cos g &= +135''\ 3 \\ +\ 34\ 3 \cos (2D-g) &= +19\ 7 \\ +\ 28\ 3 \cos 2D &= 17\ 7 \\ \text{Const} &= 3422\ 7 \\ \hline & \quad 3605''\ 4 = 60'\ 5''\ 4 = \text{H Parallax} \end{aligned}$$

Moon's semi-diameter = 16′ 22″ 4
Sun's ,, ,, = 17′ 10″ 9
Sun's Horizontal Parallax = 8″ 9

Calculation of the Eclipse for Kuruksetra

(Long = $5^h\ 8^m$ East, and Lat = 30° N)

	A	B	C
R A of Mean Sun =	151° 57′ 35″	152° 2′ 31″	152° 7′ 27″
Local mean time (from 12 noon) =	$-6^h\ 52^m$	$-4^h\ 52^m$	$-2^h\ 52^m$
Converted into degrees etc =	−103° 0 0	−73° 0 0	−43° 0 0
R A of meridian or Sid time = γQ =	48° 57′ 35″	79° 2′ 31″	109° 7′ 27″

Obliquity of the ecliptic = 23° 58′ 24″

	A	B	C
Long of culminating pt of the ecliptic = γC =	51° 30′ 2″	79° 58′ 2″	107° 24′ 49″
Decl of cul pt = CQ =	18° 32′ 28″	23° 34′ 59″	22° 47′ 20″
Angle bet ecliptic and meridian = θ =	74° 13′ 38″	85° 34′ 13″	π−82° 21′ 1″
ZC = φ − CQ =	11° 27′ 32″	6° 25′ 1″	7° 12′ 43″
ZN = lat of Zenith =	11° 2′ 18″	6° 23′ 52″	7° 8′ 40″
CN =	3° 5′ 13″	0° 29′ 40″	−0° 57′ 26″
γN = γC + CN =	51° 35′ 45″	80° 27′ 42″	106° 27′ 23″

	A	B	C
Parall. in lat. =	−11′ 28″·6	−6′ 40″·7	−7′ 27″ 4
Lat of Moon =	+23′ 17 4	+30 8·2	+36 51 5
Corrected lat. of Moon =	+11′ 48″·8	+23′ 27″·5	+29′ 24″ 1
γ⊙ = Long of Sun =	150° 13′ 9″	150° 18′ 11″	150° 23′ 13″
γN = Long of Zenith =	54 35 45	80 27 42	106 27 23
(γ⊙ − γN) =	95 37 24	69 50 29	43 55 50
Parallax in Long. =	+ 58′ 33″	+ 55′ 55″	+ 41′ 16″
Long. of Moon =	148 34 0	149 46 59	150 59 54
Corrected long. of Moon =	149° 32 33	150 42 54	151° 41 10
Long. of Sun =	150 13 9	150 18 11	150 23 13
Moon − Sun =	−0° 40′ 36″	+0° 24′ 43″	+1° 17′ 57″

Let X represent Moon − Sun, and Y represent the corrected latitude of Moon

X =	$-2436''$	$+1483''$	$+4677''$
1st diff =		$+3919$	$+3194$
2nd diff =		-725	

$$\therefore \quad X = +1483'' + 3556''\cdot 5t - 362''\,5\,t^2$$

where t is measured from the instant B and is in units of two hours

Y =	$+709''$	$+1408''$	$+1764''$
1st diff. =		$+699$	$+356$
2nd. diff. =		-343	

$$\therefore \quad Y = +1408'' + 527''\cdot 5t - 171''\,5\,t^2$$

Sum of the semi-diameters of Sun and Moon

$$= 32'\,33''\,3 = 1953'' \text{ nearly.}$$

Kurukṣetra mean time	X	Y	$\sqrt{X^2+Y^2}$		
5-8 A M	−2436″	−709″	2537″		
5-23 ,,	−1907	+815	2074		
				−410	
5-38 ,,	−1389	+916	1664		
				−322	
5 53 ,,	−882	+1011	1342		
				−175	
6-8 ,,	−386	+1101	1167		
				+ 23	+373
6 23 ,,	+98	+1186	1190		
				+198	
6 38 ,,	+571	+1265	1388		
				+303	
6-53 ,,	+1033	+1339	1691		
				+354	
7-8 ,,	+1483	+1408	2045		

Time of beginning = $5^h\ 23^m + 4^m$ = 5 27 A M

Time of ending = 6^h-53^m + 11 = 7 4 A M

Duration of the eclipse = $1^h\ 37^m$

Time of nearest approach of centres = $6^h\ 8^m + 6^m$ = 6 14 A M

Minimum distance = 1154″

Magnitude of the eclipse = $\frac{799}{2 \times 971}$ = 0 41 = 5 Indian units

Time of sunrise in Kurukṣetra mean time

= $5^h\ 35^m\ 20^s$ A M (without correcting for refraction)

= $5^h\ 32^m\ 0^s$ A M (corrected for refraction)

Upper limb of Sun visible at 5 30 A M

The eclipse began almost with sunrise

CHAPTER XV

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

A Time-Reference from the Jaiminiya Brāhmana

In the present chapter we propose to interpret the following astronomical reference from the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana* —

एतद्धस्म वै तत्पूर्वे ब्राह्मणा मीमांसान्ते क उस्विद् अद्य शिंशुमार्यै व्यात्तम् अतिप्रोष्यत इति। एषा ह वा एकायने शिंशुमारी प्रतीपं व्यादाय तिष्ठति यद् यज्ञायज्ञीयम्। तस्या एतद् अन्नाद्यम् एव मुखतोऽपिधाय स्वस्त्यत्येति।

J Brāhmana, I, 176

This passage may be translated as follows —

"This was settled by the Brāhmanas of former times, 'who to-day goes on a journey by passing beyond the opened (mouth) of the *Dolphin* (*i e* , the *Dhanisthā* cluster)'? The *Yajñāyajñīya* is this *Dolphin* which stands opening her mouth opposite (the sun) in one (*i e* , northerly) course Of that it is verily the food oblation by hiding which from her mouth one passes safely"

The above translation has been done by consulting Profs Dr R G Basāk, Mm Sītārāma Śāstrī and finally Prof Mm Vidhuśekhara Śāstrī, the Head of the Department of Sanskrit,

[1] *Cf* the *Tāndya Brāhmana*, viii, 6, 8 9, which runs thus —

एतद्धस्म वा आह कुशाम्ब स्वायवो ब्रह्मा लातव्य' किस्विदद्य शिशुमारी यज्ञपथेऽप्यस्तागरिष्यति ॥८॥

एषा वै शिशुमारी यज्ञपथेऽप्यस्ता यज्ञायज्ञीय यद्गिरागिरेत्याहात्मान तदुद्गाता गिरति ॥९॥

Caland translates this as follows —

8 A Brāhmana, Kusāmba the son of Svāyu, a Lātavya (by *gotra*), used to say bout this chant "Who forsooth, will today be swallowed by the dolphin that has been thrown on the sacrifice's path?"

9 Now the dolphin thrown on the sacrifice's path is the Yajñāyajñīya (*sāman*) By saying ' by hymn on hymn thereby the *udgātr* swallows himself "

Pañcavimsa Brāhmana, viii, 6, 8-9

It appears that this reference from the *Tāndya Brāhmana* is practically the same as that of the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana* quoted above

Calcutta University, Post Graduate Teaching in Arts An English version of the German translation of the above passage by Caland is given below for comparison

" Thus decided the Brāhmanas in earlier times 'who is to *swim away* to-day against the gaping jaw of the *Dolphin?*' The *Yajñāyajñīya* is the *Dolphin* who lies in ambush at the narrow entrance with jaws opened against the current , he puts the food in the mouth so that he can have a narrow escape as he passes by him "

We are unable to accept Caland's version The word '*prosyate*' can not mean 'swim away,' neither can '*ekāyane*' mean 'the current', nor '*apidhāya*' mean 'by putting' The passage is allegorical which means the time for beginning the sacrifice called *Yajñāyajñīya*, was settled by the Brāhmanas of former times by observing the heliacal rising of the *Delphinus* cluster, with which began the sun's northerly course The food oblation was poured into the proper fire when the day began with the sunrise and the *Delphinus* ceased to be visible The *Delphinus* or the *Dhanisthā* cluster always rises north of the east point, while the sun at the winter solstice rises south of the same point Hence the *Delphinus* is spoken of as 'staying opposite the sun'

Here the word *Śimśumārī* has been taken to mean the *Dhanisthā* or the *Delphinus* group of stars The word *Śimśumāra* literally means a dolphin The Purānas interpret the word *Śiśumāra* as the star group Little Bear [1] This meaning has been rejected for the following reasons

We have seen before that in the Vedas, the ancient Hindus had the constellations the two Dogs,[2] *viz* , the *Canis Major* and the *Canis Minor*, as also the heavenly boat[3] or the *Argonavis* ,

[1] *Visnupurāna*, II, 12

"पुच्छेग्निश्च महेन्द्रश्च कश्यपोऽथ ततो ध्रुव ।
तारका शिशुमारस्य नास्तमेति चतुष्टयम् ॥"

At the tail of the *Śiśumāra*, are the four stars, named *Agni*, *Mahendra*, *Kasyapa* and *Dhruva* (the pole star) these four stars of the *Śiśumāra* do not set (*i e* they are circumpolar)

[2] *Rgveda*, X, 14, 10—11, and also *Atharva Veda* xviii 2 11—12 *Loc cit* in the chapter on Yama and his Two Dogs

[3] *Rgveda*, X, 63, 10, also *Atharva Veda*, VII, 63 and XIV, 1? 7, *Ibid*

the Rgveda also speaks of the Ram[4] and also perhaps of the Bull[5] (*Vrsabha*). These are ignored and quite forgotten in the *Taittirīya Samhitā* and later works. But these common heritages of the Aryan race have survived in the west. Hence it is quite rational to take the word '*Simśumārī*' in the sense of the Dolphin or the *Dhanisthā* cluster. The *Jyautisa Vedāmgas* also say that the sun turned north at the beginning of the *Dhanisthās*, as has been pointed out in another chapter of the present work.

The astronomical interpretation that we thus put on the passage from the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana* is that the sacrifice here called the *yajñāyajñīya* was begun from the winter solstice day which was marked by the heliacal rising of the *Delphinis* group consisting of α, β, γ, δ and ϵ *Delphinis*.

The time for the astronomical event has been shown in the following calculations as to have been the year 1625 B.C.

In the year 1935 A.D., the star α *Delphinis* had a mean celestial longitude $= 316° 28' 31''$ and a mean celestial latitude $= 33° 1' 41''$ N.

The celestial latitude of $33° 1' 41''$ for α *Delphinis* has been supposed to remain constant for all times. When α *Delphinis* rose, the sun has been supposed to have been 18° below the horizon. The place of observation, as has been assumed, was Kuruksetra (30° N. latitude).

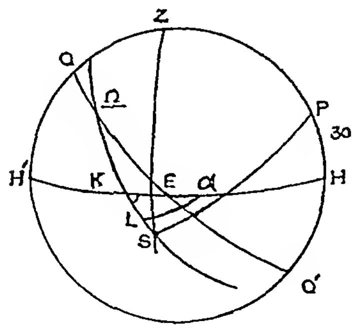
In the figure given on next page, let HPZQH′ be the meridian of Kuruksetra, HαEKH′, the horizon, QEQ′ the celestial equator, P and Z respectively the celestial pole and zenith of the observer, ♎ KLS the ecliptic at the heliacal rising of α *Delphinis* at the point α on the horizon. S is the position of the sun at 18° below the horizon. PS is the winter solstitial colure and αL is drawn $\perp$s to the ecliptic. Here $PH = 30°$ and $\alpha L = 33° 1' 41''$.

[4] *Rgveda*, I, 57, 1, अभित्यं मेषं पुरुहूतमृग्मियमिन्द्रं ॥

"Animate with praises that ram (Indra), who is adored by many etc."

(Wilson)

[5] *Rgveda*, I, 116, 18. वृषभश्च शिंशुमारश्च युक्ता ॥ "The bull and the porpoise were yoked together."—(Wilson)



The steps are —

(a) Finding the angle ZPS, this was $= 97° \; 40' \; 26''$,

(b) the $\angle EPS = 7° \; 40' \; 26''$,

(c) ♎ E $= 82° \; 19' \; 34'$,

(d) ♎ K $= 70° \; 11' \; 56''$,

(e) $\angle K = 65° \; 48' \; 42''$,

(f) $KL = 16° \; 58 \; 42''$,

(g) the celestial longitude of *α Delphinis* at the required past date $= 267° \; 10' \; 38''$

Long of same in 1935 A D $= 316° \; 28' \; 31''$

Increase in the C long of the star till 1935 A D $= 49° \; 17' \; 53''$

The Date arrived at = **1625 B.C**, which represents the real date of the *Tāndya Brāhmana* as well The full calculation is set forth below —

(a) $PS = 90° + 24° = 114°$				
$PZ = 60° \quad = \quad 60°$		141°	141°	141°
$ZS = 90° + 18° = 108°$		108°	60	114
$PS + PZ + ZS \quad = 282°$		33°	81°	27°

,, $\frac{1}{2}(PS + PZ + ZS) = 141°$

$$\tan \tfrac{1}{2} ZPS = \sqrt{\frac{\sin 81^\circ \times \sin 27^\circ}{\sin 30^\circ \times \sin 141^\circ}}$$

L sin 81° = 9 9946199	L sin 33° = 9 7361088
L sin 27° = 9 6570468	L sin 39° = 9 7988718
19 6516667	19 5349806

19 6516667
19 5349806
2 | 0 1166861
0 0583431

L tan ½ ZPS = 10 0583431

48° 50′ 10″ 329/14

for +3″

½ ZPS = 48° 50′ 13″

∠ **ZPS** = 97° 40′ 26″

Now ∠ Q P E = 90°

(*b*) Therefore ∠ E P S = 7° 40′ 26″

(*c*) ♎E = 90° − 7° 40′ 26″ = 82° 19′ 34″

(*d*) Now ♎EK = 60°, ♎E = 82° 19′ 34″, ω = 24°, ♎K = ?

cot ♎K × sin 82° 19′ 34″ = cot 60° × sin 24°
+ cos 82° 19′ 34″ × cos 24°

L cot 60° = 9 7614394	L cos 82° 19′ 35″ = 9 1255940
L sin 24° = 9 6093133	L cos 24° = 9 9607302
$\bar{1}$ 3707527	$\bar{1}$·0863242
2348295 7351	1219900
176	
167	
9	

0 2348295
0 1219900
0 3568195

$$
\begin{aligned}
20 + \log 0.35681{,}95 &= 19.5524370 \\
&110 \\
&6 \\
\hline
&19.5524486 \\
L \sin 82^\circ\, 19'\, 34'' &= 9.9960930 \\
\hline
L \cot \text{♎}K &= 9.5563556 \\
&95 \\
\hline
&40
\end{aligned}
$$

$$\text{♎}\mathbf{K} = \mathbf{70^\circ\, 11'\, 56''}$$

(*e*) Now $$\frac{\sin K}{\sin \text{♎}E} = \frac{\sin 60^\circ}{\sin \text{♎}K}$$

$$\therefore \sin K = \frac{\sin 60^\circ \times \sin 82^\circ\, 19'\, 34''}{\sin 70^\circ\, 11'\, 56''}$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
L \sin 60^\circ &= 9.937531 \\
L \sin 82^\circ\, 19'\, 34'' &= 9.996093 \\
\hline
&19.933624 \\
L \sin 70^\circ\, 11'\, 56'' &= 9.973532 \\
\hline
L \sin K &= 9.960092
\end{aligned}
$$

$$\angle \mathbf{K} = \mathbf{65^\circ\, 48'\, 42''}$$

(*f*) $$\operatorname{Sin} KL = \frac{\tan \alpha L}{\tan K}$$

$$= \frac{\tan 33^\circ\, 1'\, 41''}{\tan 65^\circ\, 48'\, 42''}$$ (The star is α *Delphinus*)

$$
\begin{aligned}
10 + L \tan 33^\circ\, 1'\, 41'' &= 19.812983 \\
L \tan 65^\circ\, 48'\, 42'' &= 10.347586 \\
\hline
L \sin KL &= 9.465397 \\
&84 \\
\hline
&13
\end{aligned}
$$

$$\mathbf{KL} = \mathbf{16^\circ\, 58'\, 42''}$$

(*g*) Long of α *Delphinus* at the required date

$$
\begin{aligned}
&= 180^\circ + \text{♎}K + KL \\
&= 180^\circ + 70^\circ\, 11'\, 56'' + 16^\circ\, 58'\, 42'' \\
&= 267^\circ\, 10'\, 38''
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{Long of same in 1935} &= 316\;\; 28\;\; 31 \\
\hline
\text{Increase in celestial long} &= 49^\circ\, 17'\, 53
\end{aligned}
$$

Increase in celestial long up to 1935 $= 49^\circ\, 17'\, 53''$

$= 177473''$

Mean precession rate $= 49''.8692$

$\therefore$ Elapsed years till 1935 A D $= 3559$ yrs

$\therefore$ Date arrived at $=$ **1625 B C**

CHAPTER XVI

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

The Vedāngas and the Maitrī-Upānisat-Tradition

As to the date of the *Vedāngas,* we have already said that these works carry a tradition as to the position of the solstices in the following form —

स्वराक्रमेते सोमार्कौ यदा साक सवासवौ ।
स्यात् तदादियुगं माघस्तपः शुक्लोऽयनं ह्युदक् ॥६॥
प्रपद्येते श्रविष्ठादौ सूर्य्याचन्द्रमसावुदक् ।
सार्पार्द्धे दक्षिणार्कस्तु माघश्रावणयोः सदा ॥७॥

Yājusa Jyautisam

"When the sun and the moon rise up together with the *naksatra Dhanisthā,* that time (or event) marks the beginning of the *Yuga* (five-yearly luni-solar cycle), of the lunar month of *Māgha,* of *Tapas* (or the first month of winter), of the light half of the month and of the beginning of the sun's northerly course The sun and the moon turn north at the beginning of the *naksatra Dhanisthā* and the sun turns south at the middle of *Aślesā* division These take place always in the month of lunar *Māgha* and *Śrāvana* "

Here the new-moon should preferably happen at about the sun-rise and the conjunction should be at the beginning of the *Dhanisthā* division The lunar *Māgha* thus begun has got three distinctive characteristics which have been pointed out before,[1] *viz* , (1) it should begin with a new-moon at the first point of the *Dhanisthā* division or cluster, as has been said before , (2) should have the full-moon near the star *Maghā* or *Regulus,* (3) the last quarter should be conjoined with *Antares* or *Jyesthā*

[1] *Vide* Chapter XIII, on 'Solstice Days in Vedic Literature.'

In spite of all these characters, this lunar *Māgha* cannot be a sidereally fixed month. It has been also pointed out already that it came in our time in the years 1924, 1927, 1932, and 1935 A D. If we take the lunar *Māgha* of the year 1924 as the gauge year, we find that a new-moon happened on the 5th February, 1924 A D at 7-32 A M Calcutta mean time or $1^h\ 38^m$ G M T, when the Sun's longitude was 315° very nearly. This longitude of 315° was equal, let us say, to 270° in the year we want to determine. This leads to a date of about 1324 B C as a first step. By making the next approximation, we arrive at the year 1353 B C as the tentative date of the *Vedānga* tradition.

Again, according to a statement found in the *Paitāmaha Siddhānta* of the *Pañcasiddhāntikā* that a Vedic lunar *Māgha* came in the year 80 A D. By an accurate back calculation we find that on January 11, 80 A D a new-moon happened at about 0 hr G M T when the sun's longitude was 289° 14′. This leads us as a first step to the date 1305 B C. The next approximation yields as a second tentative year of 1315 B C as the date of the *Vedānga* tradition.

If we want to finally settle the date of the *Vedānga* tradition, we have to use the luni-solar method. The further conditions that we have to use are (1) that the sun, moon and the first point of *Dhanisthā* division should come together, and (2) that this astronomical event should happen at about the mean sun-rise. For this purpose, we explore the time from 1353 B C, both 76 years backward and 76 years forward and we arrive at the date

January, 3, 1429 B C on which at G M T 0 hrs or Kuruksetra mean time 5-8 A M, we have,

Mean Sun = 268° 44′ 1″ 59

" Moon = 268° 13′ 23″ 28

Lunar Perigee = 267° 31′ 2″ 95

Sun's Apogee = 44° 22′ 41″

Hence, apparent Sun = 270° 12′

" Moon = 268° 7′

and *β Delphinis* = 268° 5′

On this date the instant of new-moon and the time of sun's reaching the winter solstice were the closest together in the range between the years 1429 B C and 1277 B C The new-moon happened about 4 hrs later and the sun reached the winter solstice about 5 hrs earlier Hence the year 1429 B C becomes the true date of the *Vedānga* tradition as to the position of the solstices

This tradition is also given by Varāhamihira (550 A D) in his *Pañcasiddhāntikā*, iii 21 —

आश्लेषार्धादासीद्यदा निवृत्तिः किलोष्णकिरणस्य ।
युक्तमयनं तदासीत् साम्प्रतमयनं पुनर्वसुतः ॥२१॥

" When the return of the sun towards the south (*i e* , the summer solstice) took place from the middle of *Aślesā*, the *Ayana* was right at the present time *Ayana* begins from Punarvasu "

—(Thibaut)

In his *Brhat Samhitā*, Chapter III, on *Āditya-cāra*, Varāha makes the same statement that " the sun certainly turned south at the middle of *Aślesā* and north at the beginning of *Dhanisthā* at some past date, as this is found stated in the former *Sāstras* "[1]

Bhattotpala, the commentator of the *Brhat Samhita*, has cited a similar statement as to the position of the solstices from a work named *Parāśara Samhitā* which perhaps cannot be dated earlier than the first or second century of the Christian era We have ascertained the date for this traditional position of the solstices as the year 1429 B C The former researchers who tried to find the date for this tradition were Sir William Jones, Wilford, Davis, Archdeacon Pratt and several others Their finding of the date ranges between 1200 to 1400 B C , as may be seen in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol II, etc.

[1] आश्लेषार्धाद्दक्षिणमुत्तरमयनं रवेर्धनिष्ठाद्यम् ।
नूनं कदाचिदासीद्येनोक्तं पूर्वशास्त्रेषु ॥

Brhat Samhitā, Chapter III, 1

The Maitrī Upaniṣat Tradition of the Solstices

We now take up another tradition about the position of the solstices recorded in the *Maitrī Upaniṣat*, Chapter VI, which runs as follows —

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तमन्नं वा अस्य सर्व्वस्य योनिः कालश्चान्नस्य सूर्य्यो योनिः कालस्य तस्यैतद् रूपं यन्निमेषादिकालात् सम्भृत द्वादशात्मक वत्सरमेतस्याग्नेय-मर्धमर्धं वारुण मघाद्य श्रविष्ठार्धान्तमाग्नेय क्रमेणोत्क्रमेण सार्पाद्य श्रविष्ठार्धान्तं सौम्यम्।

"It has been said elsewhere, food is the cause of all this (world of living beings), and time of food The sun is the cause of time, and nature of time is made up of space moments, etc —composed of twelve months, identical with the year One half thereof belongs to Agni, one half to Varuna Again the half commencing with the asterism *Maghā* and ending with the half of *Śraviṣṭhā* belongs to Agni, while the sun performs his southern journey, half in the inverse order beginning with the constellation *Aśleṣā* sacred to the serpents and ending with the other half of *Śraviṣṭhā* belongs to the moon (*Soma*), while the sun performs his northern journey" (Cowell)

This is a tradition and most probably does not belong to the time of the *Maitrī Upaniṣat* Anyhow it indicates that a position of the solstices was determined a few centuries before time of the *Vedāṅgas* that the summer solstice lay at the beginning of the *Maghā* division and that the winter solstice lay at the middle of the *Dhaniṣṭhā* division

We have already determined the beginning of the *Dhaniṣṭhā* division by the luni-solar method for 1924 A D, which was at 315° of celestial longitude Hence the middle of the division had a longitude of 311° 40′ in this year, and which was 270° in the year we want to determine The year arrived at becomes 1798 B C or about 1800 B C very nearly

Again in 80 A D the luni-solar method leads us to the result that the longitude of the first point of the *Dhaniṣṭhā* division was 289° 14′ for that year, the middle of the division had therefore a longitude of 295° 54′ in the year 80 A D This longitude was

= 270° in the year we want to find out The year arrived at becomes 1799 B C or 1800 B C nearly as before

In this chapter we could not use the *naksatra* divisions as used by Āryabhata I, Brahmagupta and as given in the modern *Sūrya Siddhānta,* which was very nearly true for about 499 A D The history of Hindu astronomy shows that the earliest equal division of the ecliptic into 27 *naksatras* was made at the time of the *Vedāngas* and this began with the first point of the *Dhanisthā* division fixed by the luni solar method, and we have consequently followed the same method

Hence the traditional position of the solstices as stated in the *Maitrī Upanisat* was true for about 1800 B C , but it would be rash to say that this *Upanisat* was composed at this date

CHAPTER XVII

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

Śāmkhāyana Brāhmana

In this *Brāhmana* in Chapter 1, Br 3, we have the following time-reference —

(*a*) तदाहु कस्मिन्नृतौ पुनरादधीतेति। वर्षास्विति हैक आहुर्वर्षासु वै सर्व्वे कामाः सर्वेषामेव कामानामाप्त्यै मध्यावर्षे पुनर्वसू नक्षत्रमुदीक्ष्य पुनरादधीत। * । तद्वै न तस्मिन् काले पूर्वपक्षे पुनर्वसुभ्यां सपद्यते। ये वैषाऽऽषाढ्या उपरिष्टादमावास्या भवति सा पुनर्वसुभ्यां सपद्यते। उपाप्तोऽमावस्यायां कामो भवत्युपाप्तो वर्षासूपाप्त· पुनर्वस्वोस्तस्मात्तस्या पुनरादधीत।

"People ask, 'in what season should men set up the fires again?' One opinion is that it is the rains that are favourable for all people for attaining their desires Hence for the realisation of all the desirable things the fires should be set up again at the middle of the year (मध्यावर्षे), by observing the heliacal visibility of the two stars of the *naksatra Punarvasu* (*viz*, α and β *Geminorum*)."

"But at this time of observation of the heliacal visibility, there may not be the first (light) half of the month The new-moon which comes after the full moon at the *Āsādhās*, happens near the two stars of *Punarvasu* In the rains all the desirables are obtained, when the rains set in the *Punarvasus* are visible, hence in such a new moon the fires are to be set up again"

The first part of the passage implies that the middle of the year, *i e*, the summer solstice day was marked by the heliacal visibility of the stars α and β *Geminorum* or *Castor* and *Pollux* The concluding portion is a makeshift arrangement, by which even the light half of the month is not obtained for setting up the fires again We, therefore, try to ascertain the date when the first heliacal visibility of *Pollux* or β *Geminorum* took place

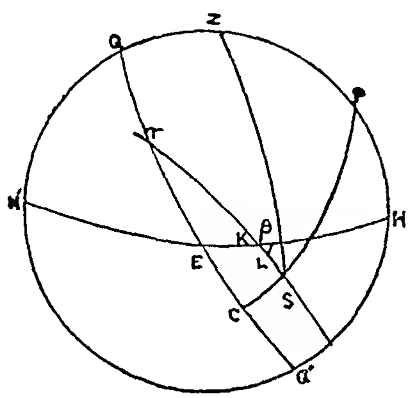
on the summer solstice day, the station selected being assumed as Kuruksetra (30°N latitude)

Heliacal Rising of Pollux on the Summer Solstice Day at Kuruksetra

In 1941 0, Longitude of Pollux $=112° \ 24' \ 8''$

Latitude ,, ,, $=+6° \ 40' \ 48''$

Let us assume, as a first approximation, the time of the event as 1100 B C The obliquity of the ecliptic at the remote date was $=23° \ 50' \ 0''$ $(=\omega)$



PS $=66° \ 10' \ 0''$ PZ $=60°$ ZS $=108°$

the angle ZPS $=130° \ 10' \ 32''$, (1)

,, ,, EPS $= 40° \ 10' \ 32''$, (2)

γE $= 49° \ 49' \ 23''$ (3)

Now γE $=49° \ 49' \ 28''$ $\omega=23° \ 50' \ 0''$ and $\angle\gamma$EK $=120°$,

γK $=64° \ 58' \ 2''$, (4)

and LK $=46° \ 54' \ 43''$, (5)

Again LB $=6° \ 40' \ 48''$ and angle K $=46° \ 54' \ 43''$,

KL $=6° \ 17' \ 22''$, (6)

Therefore the arc γL is found from the results (4) and (6) to have been $=71° \ 15' \ 24''$

.. the longitude of *Pollux* at the reqd past date

$=71° \ 15' \ 24''$

The same in 1941 A D $=112° \ 24' \ 8''$

the increase in celestial longitude in the intervening period

$=41° \ 8' \ 44''$

Hence the date arrived at is about -1022 A D

Again in the *Sāmkhāyana Brāhmana* XIX 2, we have —

(*b*) तैषस्यामावास्याया एकाह उपरिष्टाद्दीक्षेरन् माघस्य वेत्याहुस्तदुभयं व्युदितं तैषस्य त्वेवोदिततरमिव त एतं त्रयोदशमधिचरं मासमाप्नुवन्ति तावान् वै संवत्सरो यदेष त्रयोदशो मासस्तदत्रैव सर्वः संवत्सर आप्तो भवति ॥२॥

"They should consecrate themselves on one day after the new-moon of *Taisa* or of *Māgha*' they say, both of these views are current, but that as to *Taisa* is the more current as it were They obtain this thirteenth additional month, the year is as great as this thirteenth month, in it verily the whole year is obtained" (Keith)

The Vedic standard month of *Māgha* came in our time in the year 1935 A D, between Feb 3 and March 5 Three years later *i e*, in 1938, after 37 lunations came the month of *Māgha* extending from January 31 to March 2 From the mode of intercalating a lunar month as found in Vedic literature, *viz*, one month after 30 lunations, we readily recognise that the day following the new-moon of the month of *Taisa* or *Pousa* mentioned in this *Brāhmana* is correctly represented in our times by the date Feb 1, 1938 This day therefore represents in our time what was the winter solstice day in the time of the *Sāmkhāyana Brāhmana*

Now on Feb 1, 1938 at Calcutta Mean Noon

the sun had the celestial longitude	$=311° 41' 19''$
We deduct from it	$270° 0' 0''$
Hence the difference	$=41° 41' 19''$

shows the amount of the shifting of the solstices up to 1938 A D.

The date arrived at becomes, 1056 A D, which does not differ much from the date, 1022 A D arrived at before

It is further not very difficult to find a corroboration of the date arrived at, from the rule of setting up the fires again on the *Asādha* new-moon day as stated in reference (*a*) quoted before, such a new-moon happened on Aug 3, 1940 A D, the conjunction took place in the *naksatra Pusya*, and the moon neared the star *Pollux* in the previous night at about 8 P M, Calcutta mean time, and—

On Aug 3, the sun's longitude was at Calcutta mean noon $=130°44'17''$ This was 90° in the time of the *Sāmkhāyana*

Brāhmana showing a shifting of the solstices till 1940 A D =40° 44′ 17″ The date arrived at becomes,—995 A D

Hence the date of the *Śāṃkhāyana Brāhmana* works out as about **1000 B C**

CHAPTER XVIII

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

Time Indications in the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra

In the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*,[1] the rules for beginning the year-long sacrifices are stated in the following terms —

"ते चतुरहे पुरस्तान्माघ्यै पौर्णमास्यै दीक्षन्ते तेषामष्टकाया क्रयः सम्पद्यते इति नु यदि समामविज्ञाय दीक्षन्ते। यद्युवा एतस्यामेवैकाष्टकाया समा विजिज्ञासन्ते चतुरह एव पुरस्तात् फाल्गुन्यै वा चैत्रै वा पौर्णमास्यै दीक्षन्ते। तेषामपरपक्षस्याष्टम्या क्रय संपद्यते। तेनैकाष्टका न छम्बत् कुर्वन्ति। तेषां पूर्वपक्षे सुत्या सपद्यते। पूर्वपक्ष-मासाभिसम्पद्यन्ते।"

Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, XVI, 18

"They consecrate themselves four days before the full-moon day of *Māgha* , thus their purchase of *Soma* falls on the day of the last quarter (*Ekāstakā*) This would be the rule if they consecrate themselves without knowing the (beginning of the) year If, however, they want to know the (i e , beginning of the) year on the day of the last quarter of *Māgha* (*Ekāstakā*, i e when the first day of the year has already been passed) they should consecrate themselves four days before, either the full-moon day of *Phālguna* or the full-moon day of *Caitra* , their purchase of *Soma* would then fall on the 8th day of the dark half By this they do not make the last quarter (*Ekāstakā*) void Their *Sutyā* (i e extraction of *Soma* juice) falls in the first half (i e light half) of the month, and the (sacrificial) months begin in the first (or light) half"

All this reads like a slightly modified extract from the *Taittirīya Samhitā* (vii, 4, 8) or from the *Tāndya Brāhmana* (V, 9), which has been quoted and explained in Chapter XIII, 'Solstice Days in Vedic Literature' The author of the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, here recommends the following of the

[1] Edited by Caland, 1904—1913 A D published by the R A S Bengal

former rules by the performers of the year-long sacrifices The rule of beginning these sacrifices four days before full-moon near the *Phalgunīs*, is the oldest that can be traced in the *Brāhmanas* The alternative rule for beginning these year-long sacrifices four days before the full-moon day of *Māgha*, was true for the time of the *Taittirīya Samhitā* or of the *Pāndavas*, *i e* for about the time when the sun reached the winter solstice on the full-moon day of the Vedic standard month of *Māgha* Baudhāyana seems to say that on the day of the last quarter of *Māgha*, the year-beginning or the winter solstice day was already over in his time Clearly then he does not mean the Vedic standard month of *Māgha* when giving his rule His idea perhaps was, that the sun reached the winter solstice on the earliest possible day of the full-moon of *Māgha*, and that the winter-solstice day was inevitably over on the last quarter following it By a full-moon day of *Māgha*, he probably means a day like the 30th of January, 1934 A D Now-a-days the winter solstice day is the 22nd of December This would show a precession of the solstice-day by 39 days, and at the rate of one day of precession in 74 years, it would indicate a time of about 953 B C about when, the day of the last quarter of the month of *Pausa*, and not of *Māgha*, could be near to the winter solstice day We shall not be wrong to assume that this *Śrauta Sūtra* speaks of a time of about 900 B C

This work does not say that the *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*) are first of the *naksatras*, as we find enumerated in the *Taittirīya Samhitā*[1] Nor does it speak simultaneouly of the full-moon days at the *Krttikās* and the *Maghās*[2]—a statement which is very significant as the *Pleiades* (η *Tauri*) and the star *Regulus* (*Maghā*) have a difference in longitude of very nearly 90° We miss here statements like that of the *Kapisthala Katha Samhitā*, (*a*) प्रजापतेर्वा एतच्छिरो यत् कृत्तिकाः[3] (*b*) पूर्णमासे वामावस्यायां यजेत[4] or of the *Maitrāyanī Samhitā*, (*c*) प्रजापतिर्वा आग्रयणो[5] which mean, 'the *Krttikās* are

[1] *Taittirīya Samhitā*, V, 4, 10
[2] *Mahabhārata*, *Vana*, 81, 51 52
[3] and [4] *Kap*, *K Samhitā*, VI, 6
[5] *Maitrāyanī Samhitā*, IV, 6, 4,

the head of *Prajāpati* (year), that sacrifices are to be made on the full-moon or new-moon day and that *Prajāpati* is the day of the full-moon at the vernal equinox (*āgrayaṇa*)' All these statements mean a time about a hundred years before or after the year 2350 B C This *Śrauta Sūtra* has no statements of the type quoted above

In another place (XII, 1, Caland's Edn Vol II, page 85), Baudhāyana lays down the following rule for beginning the *Rājasūya* sacrifices —

राजसूयेन यक्ष्यमाणो भवति स पुरस्तात् फाल्गुन्यै वा चैत्र्यै वा पौर्णमास्या आमा-वास्येन हविषेष्ट्वा दीक्षते ।

'When a prince is being religiously served with the *Rājasūya* sacrifice, he consecrates himself by making oblations of clarified butter, on the new-moon day which precedes the full-moon day either of *Phālguna* or of *Caitra*'

It is difficult to see what season of the year is taken to begin on the new-moon which precedes the full-moon either of *Phālguna* or of *Caitra* The former of these new-moons simply means the new moon of *Māgha*, which is but a repetition of an older tradition of the winter-solstice day as stated in the *Kausītaki Brāhmana*[1] (XIX, 3) The *Mahābhārata* indicates, according to our interpretation, that Yudhisthira was consecrated for the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice on the full-moon day of *Caitra* of the year 2446 B C The Vedic standard month of *Māgha* as it came that year was similar to that of our time in 1932 A D, and the full-moon day of *Caitra* of 2446 B C corresponded with the full-moon day of April 20, 1932 A D The new-moon day which preceded this full-moon happened on the 6th April, 1932 A D If the *Baudhāyana* rule indicates that spring began according to this recorded tradition, the date when this was true, would become about 1400 B C If Baudhāyana, means a year like 1927 A D on which the new-moon in question happened on April 2, the date would come out to have been about 1100 B C If again it was a new-moon of the type of March 30, 1930 A D the date of the tradition would be about 886 B C In any case

[1] JRASBL, Vol IV, 1938, page 422

we do not get any clear indication of time from this reference. We shall, however, later on find the day for starting the *Rājasūya* sacrifice in the year 886 B C. A more definite indication of the date of this *Śrauta Sūtra* is furnished by the —

Baudhāyana Rule for Naksatresti Sacrifices

The part of the work where it gives the time for beginning the *Naksatresti* sacrifices,[1] runs as follows —

अथातो नक्षत्रेष्टीर्व्याख्यास्यामोऽग्निर्वा अकामयतान्नादो देवाना स्यामिति ता ब्राह्मणेन व्याख्याता। । साया वैशाख्याः पौर्णमास्या' पुरस्तादमावास्या भवति स सकृत्-सवत्सरस्यापभरणीभि· सपद्यते तस्यामारभेतेति ।

" We now proceed to explain the rule for performing the *Naksatresti* sacrifices. Agni wished, 'I would be the partaker of food for the gods.' This has been set forth by the *Brāhmana* (*T Br* iii, 1, 4, *et seq* as found by Caland). The full-moon which occurs near the *Visakhās* has its preceding new-moon once in the year in the *Bharanī* division, this new-moon is the day for starting the *Naksatresti* sacrifice."

A little later the rules run as follows —

विशेषान् व्याख्यास्याम । प्रजापति· सवितेत्यपाशु सर्पेभ्य आश्रेषाभ्य आज्ये करम्भमिति सर्वे यवा भवन्ति ।

" We shall now explain the special rules. Prajāpati the sun becomes *Upāmśu* (of subdued light due to the starting of the rains) on getting at the *Aślesā* division. Hence all barley corns become *Karambha* (barley powder mixed with curd) which are to be mixed with clarified butter for oblation."

Here evidently the sun is said to reach the vernal equinox on the new-moon which preceded the full-moon in the *Visākhā* division or near the *Viśākhā* 'junction' stars. Such a new-moon was of rare occurrence. Also the sun seemed to turn south at the beginning of the division *Aślesā*, and not at its middle. True it is that this *Śrauta Sutra* says[2] —

माघमासे धनिष्ठाभिरुत्तरेणैति भानुमान् ।
अर्धाश्लेषस्य श्रावणस्स दक्षिणेनोपनिवर्तते ॥ इति काष्टे भवत· ।

[1] *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, XXVIII, 2 4

[2] *Ibid*, XXVI, 29

"In the month of *Māgha* the sun on getting at the *Nakṣatra* division *Dhaniṣṭhā*, turns to the north and at the middle of the *Aśleṣā* division turns to the south in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*. These are the two limits to the sun's north-south motion."

This is evidently borrowed from the *Vedāṅgas*. This position of the solstices was not true for the time of the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*.

We understand that at the time indicated by *Nakṣatreṣṭi* rules of *Baudhāyana*, the summer solstice was at the beginning of the *Aśleṣā* division, that the vernal equinox was consequently at the end of the first quarter of the *Bharaṇī* division and the winter solstice was at the middle of the *Śravaṇā* division.

Now the oldest division of the ecliptic began with the ecliptic position of *β-Delphinis* as the first point of the *Dhaniṣṭhā* division.

The longitude of *β-Delphinis* in 1935 A.D.	= 315° 26′ 5″
Deduct half *nakṣatra*	− 6 40 0
the longitude of the middle of *Śravaṇā* divn.	= 308° 46′ 5″
Again deduct	270 0 0
Hence the long. of the end of the 1st quarter of *Bharaṇī* division	= 38° 46′ 5″

Now the longitude of the sun at Calcutta Mean noon on April 30, 1938 A.D., a new-moon day, was = 39° 14′ 31″.

This fairly agrees with the longitude of the last point of the 1st quarter of the *Bharaṇī* division obtained above.

Here a shifting of the equinoxes till 1931 A.D. of 39° 14′ 31″ indicates a lapse of 1828 years and the date arrived at becomes 891 B.C. If we want to get at a year near to this date and similar to 1938 A.D., that year becomes 886 B.C. or −885 A.D.

This date appears to be the time indicated by the *Nakṣatreṣṭi* rule of the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*.

THE BAUDHĀYANA RULE FOR THE *Pañcaśāradīya* SACRIFICES

In another place the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* lays down the following rule for beginning the *Pañcaśāradīya sacrifices*. These lasted for 5 years and were begun with the advent of the Indian

season of *Hemanta* or of the dews and ended with the Indian season of *Śarat* or autumn. Hence on the day for the beginning of this *Pañcaśāradīya* sacrifices, the desired celestial longitude of the sun was about 210° The *Baudhāyana* rule runs as follows —

पञ्चशारदीयेन यक्ष्यमाणो भवति स उपकल्पयते सप्तदश निरष्टान् वत्सतरान् एकहायनान् स पुरस्तान् मार्गशीर्ष्यै पौर्णमास्या आमावास्येन हविषेष्ट्वा सप्तदशमारुतीः पृश्नीर्वत्सतरीरालभते । * * *

B Ś Sūtra, XVIII, 11

"When a person is being served by the five-yearly sacrifice, he selects seventeen he-calves which are more than 8 days old and of not exceeding one year in age He makes the sacrifice with oblations of clarified butter on the new-moon which precedes the full-moon at the star group *Mrgaśiras* [1] (*i e* , λ, ϕ_1, and ϕ_2, *Orionis*) and secures seventeen she-calves of which the presiding deities are the *Maruts* or wind gods"

The practice was to release 17 he calves and 17 she-calves for freely roaming about in the fields or forests in the 1st year, 17 she-calves in the 2nd year, 17 she-calves in the 3rd year, and 17 she-calves in the fourth year were also set at liberty It is not clear if in the fifth year also the same practice was continued The day for beginning the sacrifice was of the new-moon preceding the full-moon at the *Mrgaśiras* (*i e* , λ, ϕ_1, ϕ_2 *Orionis*) group

Now in the year 1929 A D , the full-moon near λ *Orionis* fell on December 16 , and the preceding new-moon happened on December 1 We assume here that the sun's longitude increased by 60° in two lunations very nearly Hence the sun reached the winter solstice on the day which correspond with the new-moon on the 29th January, 1930 A D

On this day *i e* , January, 29, 1930, at 6 M N the sun's apparent longitude was = 308° 53′ 1″

Deduct 270° 0′ 0″,

[1] *Cf Āpastamba Grhya Sūtra*, XIX, 9 3 2, which records a tradition of the beginning of *Hemanta* on the *Mrgasiras* full moon day which corresponds to a mean date of about 2000 B C

. the remainder 38° 53′ 1″ represents the shifting of the solstices till 1930 A D The date arrived at becomes —885 A D which is the same as the one derived from the rule for beginning the *Nakṣatreṣṭi* sacrifices The following back calculation for the year 887 886 B C shows the beginning of the seasons and the days for the beginning of these sacrifices

Julian Calendar year and date	Julian days	At G M Noon		Remarks
		Appt Sun	App Moon	
—886 Nov 1	1397751	210 46	21 [illegible]	Indian *Hem* [illegible] star [illegible] the N M day [illegible]
—886 Nov 16	1397766	225° 58	50 1[illegible]	F M [illegible] *O* [illegible] 10 hrs before
—886 Dec 30	1397810	270 56	2 6 1	N M on day after winter [illegible] the middle [illegible] *Srava* [illegible] division
—885 Feb 27	1397869	329 18	121 51	[illegible] M 16 hrs late [illegible] *beginning* to sta[illegible]
—186 Mar 29	2397109	359 0	57 [illegible]	N M near vernal equinox at end of the 1st quarter of Bharani in *Nakṣatreṣṭi* [illegible]
—885 Apr 13	1397914	13° 27	202° 23	F M [illegible] 18 [illegible] before

The small discrepancies which the above calculations show with the *Baudhayana* statements are negligible These statements of the *Srautasūtra* are not and cannot be very accurate It should be noted in this connection that for the year,—886 A D

λ *Orionis* had a celestial long of about	13° 40′
α *Libra*	185° 5′
ι *Libra*	191° 0′

α *Libra* and ι *Libra* are the two stars in the *Viśākhā* division

Again in this year,—886 A D ,

the longitude of the end of the 1st qr of *Bharanī*	=	359° 39′
,, ,, ,, 1st pt of the *V sākhā* division	=	182° 59′
,, ,, ,, ,, *Mrgaśiras* ,,	=	36° 19′
,, ,, ,, mid point of the *Ś ravaṇā* ,,	=	269° 39′

Thus the year 887-86 B C appears to be the mean date indicated by the *Baudhāyana* rules for beginning the *Nakṣatreṣṭi*, the *Pañcaśāradīya* and the *Rājasūya* sacrifices This date however, is liable to being lowered by 76 years or by even a greater luni-solar period

We now take up the *Baudhāyana* rules for setting up fires by the householder The rules in question state the suitable or auspicious days for the purpose and have nothing to do with the beginnings of the seasons The auspicious days are the new-moon days at (1) *Krttikās*, (2) *Rohiṇīs*, (3) *Punarvasus*, (4) *P Phalgunīs*, (5) *U Phalgunīs* and (6) *Citrā* A Brahmin is to set up his fires in spring, a Ksatriya in summer, a Vaiśya in autumn and a car-maker in the rains [1] In this connection it is said —

(*a*) "या वैशाख्या· पौर्णमास्या उपरिष्टादमावास्या भवति सा सकृत् संवत्सरस्य रोहिण्या सम्पद्यते तस्यामादधीत ।

' The new-moon which follows the full-moon in the *Viśākhā* division, once happens in a year with the moon in the *Rohiṇī* division, that is the day on which the fires are to be set up '

This rule states when to get at the day of a new-moon in the *Rohiṇī Nakṣatra* There is another rule given for settling when to get at a new-moon near the *Punarvasus* (*Castor* and *Pollux*)

(*b*) या आषाढ्याः पौर्णमास्या पुरस्तादमावास्या भवति सा सकृत् सवत्सरस्य पुनर्वसुभ्या संपद्यते तस्यामादधीतेति[2] ।

' The new-moon which precedes the full-moon in the *Nakṣatra Āṣāḍhā* (here the *U Āṣāḍhā*), once (*i e* , on rare occasions) happens in a year with the moon near the *Punarvasu* (*Castor* and *Pollux*) , the fires should be set up on this day "

These are purely luni-solar-stellar phenomena which repeat roughly in 8, 11 or 19 years The *Rohiṇī* and the *Punarvasu*

[1] Baudhāyana Ś Sūtra, II, 12

[2] *Ibid*, III, 1, this is also repeated in XXV, 18

new-moons answering to the above description happened in the year 884 B C , as the following calculation will show —

Year and date	Julian days	At G M Noon		Remarks
		Appt Sun	Appt Moon	
—883 A D April, 19	1398651	19° 41′	194° 27′	F M in *Viśākhā* Dn
—883 A D May, 4	1398666	34° 1′	23° 48	N M in *Bharanī* Dn for setting up fires
—883 A D June, 3	1398696	62° 34′	58° 45′	N M in *Punarvasu* Dn for setting up fires
—883 A D June, 27	1398710	75° 51	253° 0	F M in *U Āṣādha* Dn

Viśākhā division = 182° 59′ to 196°19′
Punarvasu division = 62° 59′ to 76° 19′
Long of *Pollux* = 73° 14′

It is evident that such new-moons came in also in the year 895 B C , i e 8 years before the date 887 B C arrived at before The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[1] lays down the rule that fires should be set up, on the day of the new-moon with which the lunar *Vaiśākha* ended, meaning of course the new-moon, either at the *Krttikās* or the *Hyades* (*Rohinīs*) These rules for setting up fires by a householder have nothing to do with the beginning of any season of the year and do not indicate the date of the *Baudhāyana Sūtra*, nor of the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, nor of any other work of the kind

We are thus led to conclude that the mean date for the Baudhāyana rules for sacrifices should be taken as the year 887-16 B C

[1] *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, XI, 1 1 7 , cited by S B Dikṣita in his भारतीय ज्योति शास्त्र, page 130 (1st Edn) योऽसौ वैशाखस्यामावस्या तस्यामादधीत आत्मन्येवैतत् प्रजाया पशुषु प्रतितिष्ठति ॥

One point more that we want to notice here is that the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* mentions the name Pāṇini in the *Pravara* section 3 (Vol III, p 418) and also the name Kaulāśva Yāska in XVI, 27 Whether these statements place the dates of the celebrated grammarian and the author of the Vedic lexicon, *Nirukta*, before the time of the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* (900 B C nearly), is a matter that cannot be settled astronomically True it is that the word '*Yavanānī*' as found in Pāṇini means the written alphabet of the Ionian Greeks, but it would be far from rational to conclude that the Yavanas did not come to India before the times of Alexander or of Darius

CHAPTER XIX

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

The Śatapatha and the Taittirīya Brāhmanas

The time when the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* came into its present form is indicated by the following passage[1] —

तदाहु । कस्मिन्नृतावभ्यारम्भ इति ग्रीष्मेऽभ्यारभेतेत्युहैकऽआहुर्ग्रीष्मो वै क्षत्रियस्यर्तुः क्षत्रिययज्ञ उवाऽएष यदश्वमेध इति ॥२॥ तद्वै वसन्तऽ एवाभ्यारभेत । वसन्तो वै ब्राह्मणस्यर्तुर्यो उ वै कश्च यजते ब्राह्मणीभूयेवैव यजते तस्माद्वसन्तऽ एवाभ्यारभेत ॥३॥ सा यासौ फाल्गुनी पौर्णमासी भवति । तस्यै पुरस्तात षडहे वा सप्ताहे वर्त्विज उपसमायान्त्यध्वर्युश्च होता च ब्रह्मा चोद्गाता चैतान् वाऽ अन्वन्यऽ ऋत्विजः ॥४॥

"In this connection they say 'in what season is the beginning to be made?' Some say 'it should be begun in summer as summer is the season for the Ksatriyas and the *Aśvamedha* is the sacrifice for the Ksatriyas alone This should be begun in spring alone, as spring is the season for the Brāhmanas, *whoever makes the sacrifice begins it by being a Brāhmana as it were* Hence this sacrifice is to be begun with the spring alone That beginning takes place on the full-moon night at the *Phalgus* Six or seven days before it, come the priests who are *adhvaryu*, *hotr*, *brahmā*, *udgātr*, etc

In this passage we get the indication that the Indian spring at this period, set in at the full-moon near the *Phalgus* or that the sun had the tropical longitude of 330° on the full-moon day of *Phālguna* In the earliest Vedic times the full moon day of *Phālguna* was the winter solstice day, and the time was about 4600 B C Here we notice a clear statement that the full-moon day of *Phālguna* was the beginning of spring The date, which is at the end of this transitional age, has been shown in the next chapter as about 625 B C Although this *Brāhmana* records

[1] *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, 13, 4, 1, 2 to 4 Weber's Edn, page, 979

the traditions about Yājñavalkya and Janaka of Mithilā, the present recension of it cannot be much earlier than what has been stated above This change in the meaning of the *Phālgunī* full-moon is also recorded by the *Āpastamba* and *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtras*

In the *Taittirīya Brāhmana* also we have evidence of this new meaning of the *Phālgunī* full-moon day[1] —

वसन्ता ब्राह्मणोऽग्निमादधीत। वसन्तो वै ब्राह्मणस्यर्तु.। स्व एवैनमृतावाधाय। ब्रह्मवर्चसी भवति। मुख वा एतदृतूनां यद्वसन्त.। या वसन्तेऽग्निमाधत्ते। मुख्य एव भवति। * : *

ग्रीष्मो वै राजन्यस्यर्तुः। शरदि वैश्य आदधीत। शरद्वै वैश्यस्यर्तु. ॥७॥

न पूर्व्वयो. फल्गुन्योरग्निमादधीत। एषा वै जघन्या रात्रिः सवत्सरस्य यत्पूर्वे फल्गुनी। पृष्टित एव सवत्सरस्याग्निमाधाय। पापीयान् भवति। उत्तरयोरादधीत। एषा वै प्रथमा रात्रि. सवत्सरस्य। यदुत्तरे फल्गुनी। मुखत एव सवत्सराग्निमाधाय। वसीयान् भवति इति ॥८॥

"A Brāhmana should set up his fire in spring Spring is the season for the Brāhmaṇa what is spring is the first season of the year One who sets up fire in spring, becomes a chief among men Summer is the season for the Rājanya (Ksatriya) A Vaiśya should set up his fire in autumn and autumn is the season for the Vaiśyas

"Fire should not be set up on the day of full-moon at the *Pūrva Phālgunīs* (δ and θ *Leonis*) It is the last night of the year what is the full-moon at the *Pūrva Phālgunīs* , a man becomes a sinner by making fire for the year at the fag end Fire should be set up in the full-moon at the *Uttara Phālgunīs* (β *Leonis* and another small star near to it), it is the first night of the year—the full-moon night at the two *Uttara Phālgunīs* A man becomes wealthy by making fire from the very beginning (of the year)."

Thus in the *Taittirīya Brāhmana* also we have a clear indication of this new meaning of the *Phālgunī* full-moon The date for this meaning cannot be much earlier than about 625 B.C as is set forth in the next chapter

[1] *Taittirīya Brāhmana*, 1, 8, 2, 7 8

The question whether the superior limit to the date when the full-moon at the *Uttara Phālgunīs* marked beginning of spring can be raised higher than this 625 B C, is a very knotty one If it can be established that at the time of these *Brāhmanas*, the calendar makers could discover the occurrence of the second *Phālguna* as an intercalary month, the date may go up to 757 B C as the following calculations will show —

On Feb 27, T 756 A D, at G M—0 hr or K M T, 5-8 A M we have,

$$\text{Apparent sun} = 330^\circ\ 0'\ 8''$$

$$\text{,, Moon} = 148^\circ\ 10' \text{ nearly,}$$

$$\text{and } \beta\ Leonis = 133^\circ\ 21'$$

The full-moon happened 4 hours later not very far from *β Leonis*, the 'junction' star of the *naksatra*, *Uttara Phālgunī* This full-moon was similar to that which happened on March 28, 1945 A D

Again as the *Śatapatha Brāhmana* has very frequent references to *Asādhā*[1] (अषाढ़ा), which means the full-moon at the *naksatra*, *Uttarāsādha*, we understand that the full-moon at this *naksatra* in some years marked the summer solstice day Now we had on July 1, 762 A D a full-moon as —

On June, 30,—762 A D, at G M Noon

$$\text{Appt Sun} = 89^\circ\ 7'\ 54'',$$

$$\text{,, Moon} = 265^\circ\ 5'\ 44'' \text{ nearly}$$

$$\left.\begin{array}{l}\acute{S}ravan\bar{a}\\ \text{or } Altair\end{array}\right\} = 263^\circ\ 25'\ 41''$$

The full-moon happened about 12 hrs later, *i e*, at about 5-8 A M of Kuruksetra mean time of July, 1, and this was also summer solstice day This full-moon was similar to that which happened on July, 31, 1939 A D The *Śatapatha Brāhmana* indicates that the *āsādhī* or the full-moon at the *naksatra* *āsādha* was in some years the summer solstice day and in some

1 Cf *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, 2 ch, 6, 3, 12 13, 8ch, 5, 4, 1, the last reference has अषाढा वै रस एष वाचि which is most significant Cf also 11 ch 4, 2, 5 and c

years the full-moon at the *Uttara Phālguni* marked the coming of spring. These two phenomena, of course cannot happen in the same year

If the rule-givers or calendar-makers could discover the second *Caitra* as an intercalary month, the date may go up to 901 B C for the *Phalguni* full-moon marking the advent of spring We had on Feb 28,—900 A D , G M Noon

$$\text{Appt Sun} = 330° \ 24' \ 56''$$

$$,, \ \text{Moon} = 144° \ 59' \ 50''$$

$$\beta \ \textit{Leonis} = 131° \ 22' \ 48''$$

This full-moon corresponds to that on 31st March 1934 in respect of the moon's phases near to the fixed stars

The corresponding *āsādhi* fell on the 2nd of July, 906 A D on which at G M N ,

$$\text{Appt Sun} = 89° \ 49' \ 22''$$

$$,, \ \text{Moon} = 269° \ 3' \ 33''$$

$$\left.\begin{array}{r}\text{and } \textit{Altair} \text{ or} \\ \textit{Śravanā}\end{array}\right\} = 261° \ 27' \ 29''$$

The full-moon happened in about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. It was similar to the full-moon on August 1, 1921 A D

It must be said on the other hand that the *Vedānga* calendar recognises only the second *Āsādha* and the second *Pausa* as intercalary months On this basis, the date cannot be raised beyond 625 B C.

CHAPTER XX

BRĀHMANA CHRONOLOGY

Time References from the Kātyāyana and the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtras

In this chapter we propose to interpret as far as possible the following time references first from the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* and shall also consider those from the *Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra* Those from the first work are

(*a*) शुक्लपक्षसप्तम्या दीक्षा सरस्वती-विनशने ।

Pt I, xiv, 5, 30

" The day for being consecrated for the *Sārasvata* sacrifice is the seventh day of the light half (of *Caitra*) "

(*b*) तुरायण वैशाखीशुक्लस्य पञ्चम्यां ॥१॥ चैत्रस्य वा ॥

Pt II, ii, 1,2

" The *Turāyana* sacrifice is to be made on the 5th day (*tithi* ?) of the light half of *Vaiśākha* or of *Caitra* "

(*c*) द्वितीय· पञ्चशारदीय ॥३॥ तेन यक्ष्यमाण· पञ्चवर्षाण्याश्वयुजीशुक्लेषु चतुस्त्रिंशतं पशूनालभते मारुतान् वैश्वस्तोमान् क्षिणादङ्गान् ॥४॥

Pt II, xii, 1, 3

" The second is the five-yearly or the *Pañcaśāradiya* sacrifice One who is being served by this sacrifice collects in the light half of the month of *Āśvina*, thirty-four animals (i e 17 bull calves and 17 cow-calves) which are sacred to the Maruts to be liberated in honour of the Vaiśvadevas with the proper sacrificial fees to the priests "

(*d*) चातुर्म्मास्यप्रयोग· फाल्गुन्याम् ॥१॥

Pt I, v, 1, 1

" The four monthly sacrifices to be begun on the full moon day of *Phālguna* "

(e) आषाढ्या "मयन्तेयोनि"रिति समारोह्यादवसाय निर्मथ्य वरुणप्रघासाः ॥
Pt I, x, 3, 1

"The *Varunapraghāsa* ceremony is to be performed on the full-moon day of *Āsādha* "

(*f*) "संवत्सरेप्सोः फाल्गुन्युदृष्टे शुनाशीरीयेणेष्ट्वा सोमेन पशुनेष्ट्वा वा यजेत पौर्णमास्याम् ।"

'The sacrificer who wants a year-long sacrifice should begin by performing the *Sunaśīriya* sacrifice with Soma or an animal on the day of the first visibility of the crescent before the full-moon day of *Phālguna*, the sacrifices to continue from the full-moon day '

(*g*) "राज्ञोऽश्वमेधः सर्व्वकामस्य ॥१॥ अष्टम्या नवम्या वा फाल्गुनीशुक्लस्य ॥२॥
Pt II, xx, 1, 1–2

The king who wants all his desires to be satisfied should perform the *Asvamedha* sacrifice he should get consecrated for it on the eighth or the ninth day or *tithi* of the light half of *Phālguna* "

(*h*) माघीपक्षयजनीये दीक्षा ।
Pt, II, xv, 1, 4

" A king should consecrate himself for the *Rājasūya* sacrifice in the light half of *Māgha* "

(*i*) वाजपेयः शरदि अवैश्यस्य ॥१॥
Pt II, xiv, 1, 1

" The *Vājapeya* sacrifice is to be done in autumn by people other than Vaiśyas, *i e*, by the Brāhmanas and the Ksatriyas "

Of the 9 references quoted above the most striking are the references (*d*) and (*e*) which tend to show that the full-moon day of *Phālguna* was regarded as the beginning of spring and that the full-moon of *Āsādha* was taken as the summer solstice day or the advent of the rains according to the nature of different years of the time It is evident that both such full-moon days as indicative of the starting of spring and of the rains, cannot be comprised in the same year as four lunations

= 118 nearly and the two seasons roughly = 122 days This latter period is affected by the position of the sun's apse line

Originally in the earlier Vedic period the full-moon day of *Phālguna* meant the winter solstice day, when the new-moon of *Māgha* ended, also meant the same day of the tropical year These phenomena came at intervals of four years as 4 tropical years = 1461 days nearly and 49 5 lunations = 1460 days approximately and the moon's perigee playing an important part may contribute to the equality of the two periods

Now coming down to the time of the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, the same day is spoken of or indicated as the beginning of spring We are thus led to a period when the full-moon day of *Phālguna* came to be interpreted differently We accordingly take the full-moon day of *Phālguna* of the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* to be a day like the 26th of March, 1937, the latest possible day in our time for this lunar phase according to the *Vedānga* calendar, which was taken for the beginning of spring at the time of this *Śrauta Sūtra*

Now on March 26, 1937 at G M N, the sun's apparent longitude was = 5° 26′ nearly, and this longitude at the time of this *Śrauta Sūtra* was according to our interpretation = 330° Hence the shifting of the solstices was 35° 26′ up to 1937 A D

This indicates a lapse of 2560 years till 1937 A D and the date as,—623 **A D**

Similarly using the latest possible day for the *Āṣādha* full-moon day according to the *Vedānga* calendar in our time was the 29th July, 1931 On this day at G M N, the Sun's longitude was = 125° 23′ nearly As this longitude at the time of this *Śrauta Sūtra* was = 90° for the summer solstice day, we see that the shifting of the solstices till 1931 becomes 35°23′ nearly, indicating a lapse of 2560 years and the date as,—629 A D

Thirdly by considering the reference (*b*) as to the *Turāyana* sacrifice day, we take the day in question as similar to April 25, 1936 A D which was the vernal equinox day of a year at the time of the *Śrauta Sūtra*

Now on April 25, 1936 A D the sun's apparent longitude was=35°1′, which represents shifting of the solstices, and the year arrived at becomes,—624 A D

Fourthly it is possible to arrive at the date,—624 A D from reference *(c)* from the *Pañcaśāradiya* sacrifices The day in question appears to have been the *Anumati* full-moon day of *Āśvina*

The reference *(f)* is an echo from the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*, and this *Śrauta Sūtra* is a crude follower of an old rule The rest of the references do not present any peculiarly interesting feature

A calendar for,—624 to—623 A D and for one day of,—629 A D are shown below, giving the sacrificially important dates

Luni-solar Elements at G M N

Julian Calendar	Julian Days	Appt Sun	Appt Moon	Remarks
−629 A D Jan 30	1491416	89°50′8″	269°32′	Summer Solstice day on *Āsādha* F M day *Varuna Praghāsa* to start
−624 A D Mar 27	1493228	359°48′3″	54°4′	Lunar *Vaisākha*, 5th day of light half V Equinox day *Turāyana* sacr fice day
−624 A D April, 6	1493238	9°27′16″	181°58′	F M near *α Libra (Visākhā)*
−624 A D Sept 29	1493414	179°40′23″	353″23′	*Anumati* F M day on Autumnal Equinox day *Pānca sāradīya* to start
−623 A D Feb 25	1493563	330°17′1″	144°34′	F M, in *U Phālgunī* spring begins *Cāturmāsya* to start

Precession of Equinoxes from —624 to 499 A D = 15°32′28″

The *Dhanisthā naksatra* extends from 277°47′32″ to 291°7′3″

Aśvinī ,, ,, ,, ,, 344°27′32″ to 357°47′32″

Uttara Phalgunī ,, ,, 131°7′32″ to 144°27′20″

Uttara Āsādhā ,, ,, 251°7′32″ to 264°27′32″

Viśākhā ,, ,, ,, 184°27′32″ to 197°47′32″

We are thus led to conclude that the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* should be dated about the period from,—629 to —623 A D The date of the rules for the various sacrifices can not be raised, but it may be lowered, if necessary, (for the book) on literary and other evidences.

In this connection we cite the following rules from the *Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra* —

(*a*) अक्षय ह वै चातुर्म्मास्ययाजिनः सुकृत भवति ॥१॥ फाल्गुन्या पौर्णमास्या चैत्र्या वा वैश्यदेवेन यजेत ॥२॥ VIII, 1, 1-2

"Inexhaustible become the merits of the performers of the four monthly (*cāturmāsya*) sacrifices These should be (begun) on the full-moon day of *Phālguna* or of *Caitra* by using the *rcas* addressed to the *Viśvedevas* "

(*b*) मधुश्च माधवश्चेति चतुर्भिर्मासनामभिरेककपालमभिजुहोति ॥ VIII, 2, 18

"" In the four months which are counted as *Madhu Mādhava* &c , the performers of the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices should offer cakes, which are formed of one hemisphere (*kapāla*) as oblations to the fire "

This shows the same feature as the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* rules on this point, *viz* , that the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices should be begun with the advent of spring and the tropical months of *Madhu* and *Mādhava* constitute the spring

Here the literary evidences may settle the priority in time of the two *Śrauta Sūtras* So far as the astronomical indications go they point for both the period of about 630 to 624 B C

CHAPTER XXI

INDIAN ERAS

Eclipses in the Samyukta Nikāya and the Date of the Buddha's Nirvāna

There are two opinions as to the date of the Buddha's Nirvāna Some or almost all modern scholars are of the view that the event took place in the year 483 B C[1], on the other hand there is a Ceylonese tradition that it took place in the year 544 B C In the present chapter we want to settle which of the above dates for the Buddha's Nirvāna is correct, by the data furnished by the account of the eclipses recorded in the *Samyukta Nikāya*

In this work, Part I, *Sagātha-Vagga,* Book II, Chapter I, is styled *Devaputta-Samyuttam* In it the *suttas* 9 and 10 speak of an eclipse of the moon to have been followed by an eclipse of the sun The context appears to indicate that these eclipses were separated by only a fortnight The original Pali texts[2] are quoted below as far as necessary

§ 9 *Chandimā*

1 Sāvatthyam Viharati ||

Tena kho pana Samayena Chandimā devaputta Rāhunā asurindena gahito hoti || Atha kho Chandima devaputto Bhagavantam anussaramāno tāyam Velāyām imam gāthām abhāsi ||

2 Namo te Buddha Vīr-atthu || Vippamutto si sabbadhi || Sambādhapatippano-smi || tassa me saranam bhavāti || ||

3 Atha Kho Bhagavā chandimam devaputtam ārabha Rāhum asurindam gāthayā ajjabhāsi ||

Tathāgatam arahantam || chandimā saranam gato ||

Rāhu chandam pamuñcassu || buddhā lokānukampakāti ||

[1] Cunningham's Book of Indian Eras, p, 34

[2] Feer's Edn of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, Part I, pp 50 51,

We give the translation by Mrs Rhys Davids[1] —

"The Exalted One was once staying at Sāvatthī Now at that time Chandimā son of the Devas, was seized by Rāhu, lord of Asuras Then Chandimā calling the Exalted One to mind, invoked him by this verse —

> O Buddha ! Hero ! glory be to thee !
> Thou art wholly set at liberty !
> Lo ! I am fallen into dire distress !
> Be thou my refuge and my hiding place !

Then the Exalted one addressed a verse to Rāhu, lord of the Asuras, on behalf of Chandimā, son of the Devas —

> To the Tathāgata, the Arahant
> Hath Chandimā for help and refuge gone
> O Rāhu, set the moon at liberty !
> The Buddhas take compassion on the world "

We next cite the section or sutta

§ 10 *Suriyo*

1 Tena kho pana Samayena Suriyo devaputto Rāhunā asurindena gahito hoti || Atha Kho Suriyo devaputto Bhagavantam anussaramano tāyam velāyām imam gāthām abhāsi || ||

2 Namo te Buddha Vīra-tthu || Vippamuttosi sabbadhi || Sambādhapatippanno smi || tassa me saranam bhavāti || ||

3 Atha Kho Bhagavā Suriyam devaputtam ārabbha
Rāhum asurindam gāthayā ajjhabhāsi || ||
Tathāgatam arahantam || Suriyo saranam gato ||
Rāhu pamuñca Surīyam || buddhā lokānukampakāti || ||
Yo andhakāre tamasi pabhamkaro ||
Verocano mandalī uggatejo ||
Mā Rāhu gilīcaram antalikkhe ||
Pajam mama Rāhu pamuñca Sūriyan-ti || ||

Mrs Rhys Davids' translation runs as follows —

"Now at that time, Suriya, son of Devas, was seized by Rāhu, lord of Asuras Suriya, calling the Exalted One to mind, invoked him by this verse —

> O Buddha ! Hero ! Glory be to thee !
> Thou art wholly set at liberty !

1 The Book of the Kindred Sayings (*Samyutta Nikāya*) pages 71 73

Lo! I am fallen into sore distress
Be thou my refuge and my hiding-place!

Then the Exalted One addressed a verse to Rāhu, lord of Asuras, on behalf of Suriya, son of the Devas —

To the Tathāgata, the Arahant,
Hath Suriya for help and refuge gone
O Rāhu, set the sun at liberty!
The Buddhas take compassion on the world
Nay, Rāhu, thou that walkest in the sky,
Him that thou chokest, darkening the world
Swallow him not, the craftsman of the light,
The shining being of the disc, the fiery heat,
My kith and kin—Rahu, set free the sun!"

We understand that the eclipse of the moon was closely followed by an eclipse of the sun, and apparently at a very short interval, *viz*, of a fortnight, as the phrase *tena kho pana samayena* (तेन खलु पुन: समयेन) indicates, *i e*, the two events happened in the short period of time of the Buddha's stay at Śrāvastī

Now the mere happening of two eclipses, one of the moon followed only a fortnight later by one of the sun, is not quite adequate for settling our problem We want one more circumstance of the eclipses, *viz*, the lunar month in which these two eclipses were visible at Śrāvastī The *Devaputta Saṃyuttaṃ* contains ten *suttas* in all, of which two relate to *Kassapa*, one each to *Māgha*, *Māgadha*, *Dāmani*, *Kāmada*, *Pañcālcanda*, *Tāyana*, *Candimā* and *Surio* All of these are spoken of as sons of *Devas*

Now the *Devas* according to the Hindu tradition are 33 in number [1] They are the eight *Vasus*, eleven *Rudras*, twelve *Ādityas*, *Indra* and *Prajāpati*

Here *Kassapa Devaputta* may be identified with *Prajāpati* the presiding deity of the five-yearly luni-solar Vedic cycle The twelve *Ādityas* are the twelve months of the year and consequently the lunar month of *Māgha* is a *Deva* according to the Hindu tradition It is therefore likely that lunar *Māgha* itself

[1] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣat*, Chap III, Br 9, 2 3

is spoken of here as *Māgha Devaputta* in the *Samyukta Nikāya*. In the *Devaputta sutta* it is said that first came *Kassapa* to meet the Buddha, then came *Māgha* and then came the rest. So far as we can understand of the allegory underlying these *suttas*, the winter solstice day marking the advent of *Kassapa* or *Prajāpati* came first, then came the full-moon ending month of *Māgha*, a *Devaputta* with the full-moon near the *nakṣatra Puṣyā*. The *Devaputtas* of the section are probably some other gods either of the Hindu or of the Buddhist tradition.

The two consecutive eclipses spoken of in the *Samyukta Nikāya* most probably happened in the following order.

(1) *Kassapa* or the winter solstice day came first.

(2) An eclipse of moon followed it at about the 'junction star' δ-Cancræ.[1]

(3) An eclipse of the sun came a fortnight later.

Thus the solar eclipse happened in the middle of the full-moon ending *Māgha* and the lunar eclipse at its beginning; both the astronomical events were observable from Śrāvastī where the Buddha was staying at the time.

Now on looking up the work *Canon der Finsternisse*,[2] we find that in the period of time from —580 A.D. to —483 A.D., the only eclipses first of the moon and then of the sun at an interval of a fortnight, of which the solar eclipse happened at the middle of the full-moon ending *Māgha* and both the eclipses were visible from Śrāvasti, were :—

(1) A lunar eclipse on
December 29, —559 A.D. (560 B.C.) Julian day no. = 1517216.
Full moon happened at 17 hrs. 30 m. G.M.T. or 23 hrs. 0 m. I.S.T. Magnitude of the eclipse = 6.8 Indian units.
Duration of the eclipse = 2 hrs. 40 mins.

[1] At this period of time a full moon at about 3° behind δ cancræ gave the winter solstice day. For on December 27, 576 B.C. at G.M. Noon App. Sun = 270° 17′, App. Moon = 95° 57′ and δ cancræ = 93° nearly. Full moon happened about 5.12 A.M. I.S.T. and Sun reached the winter solstice at about 10.15 A.M. I.S.T.

[2] The great book on eclipses by Oppolzer, Vienna, 1887.

(2) A solar eclipse on
January 14, −558 A D (559 B C), Julian day no = 1517262
New moon happened at 6 hrs 38 m G M T or 12 hrs 8 m I S T
Longitude of conjunction of Sun and Moon = 288° 401

The central line of the *annular* eclipse passed through the three places A, B and C having the following longitudes and latitudes —

Station	*Long*	*Lat*	*Location of Station*
A	30° E	35° N	150 miles west of Cyprus
B	80° E	31° N	Nanda Devi Peak of the Himalayas
C	119° E	57° N	A place in East Siberia

Both these eclipses were visible from Śrāvastī in the district of Rae Barelli, the first was a partial eclipse of the moon and the second though an annular eclipse was a partial one at Śrāvastī The sun had reached the winter solstice 18 days before the day of the solar eclipse, *i e*, on the 27th December, 560 B C

If we accept that the Buddha's *Nirvāna* happened in 544 B C or −543 A D, the eclipses in question as referred to in the *Samyutta Nikāya* happened 15 years before that date The other finding of the *Nirvāna* year as 483 B C becomes 76 years later than the year of the eclipses If the tradition of the eclipses is true and our interpretation of the month of their happening be correct, the year 483 B C for the Buddha's *Nirvāna* is inadmissible Here the Ceylon-Burma tradition as to the *Nirvāna*-year, *viz*, 544 B C, is really the true date of the great event

CHAPTER XXII

INDIAN ERAS

Kaniska's Era

The eras used in the *Kharosthī* inscriptions are still a matter for controversy Dr Sten Konow in his celebrated edition of them in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol II, pp lxxxii-lxxxiii, has collected together 36 instances of dates from these inscriptions and has divided them into two groups, A and B The dates used in Group A belong to an earlier era, while those in Group B use the era or the regnal years of Kaniska In this chapter we propose to ascertain the era used in this second Group B Of the dates in this latter group only those which are found in Nos 26 and 35 give us some clue as to the era used, *viz* , 26 Zeda *sam 11 Āsādhasa masasa di 20 Utaraphagunc is'a Ksunami marodasa marjhakasa Kaniskhasa rajemi*

35 Und *Sam 61 cetrasa mahasa divasa athami di 8 ise Ksunami Purvāsādhe*

These instances state that in the eleventh year of king Kaniska on the 20th day of lunar Āsādha, the moon was conjoined with the *naksatra Uttaraphalgunī*, and that in the year 61, of Kaniska, the moon's *naksatra* was *Pūrvāsādhā*, on the 8th day of *caitra* From some examples of date in the *Kharosthi* inscriptions Dr Konow has come to the conclusion that "the full-moon day must be the first day of the month," the chief example being that the first day of *Vaiśākha* was taken as the full-moon day of *Vaiśākha* (*samvatsare triśatime* 103 *veśākhasa divase prathamime di atra punapakse*—No 10, Group A of Konow's list) Here there is no room for a difference of opinion with Dr Konow But I have to say that this system of reckoning the full-moon ending lunar months is not Indian,—it may be Greek or it may be Babylonian The month that is called *Vaiśākha* in this inscription would be called the full-moon ending

lunar *Jyaistha* according to the Indian reckoning In the *Mahābhārata* also we have "the full-moon near the *Maghās* is about to come and the month of *Māgha* is also drawing to its close "[1]

Now accepting the reckoning of the full-moon ending months as reckoned in the inscriptions, the meaning is clear that the day that is spoken of as the 20th of *Āsādha*, is the 5th day of new-moon ending *Śrāvana* and the 8th day of *Caitra* is the 8th day of the dark half of *Caitra* Hence we have the dates as —

(i) Year 11, month *Śrāvana*, 5th day, *Uttaraphalgunī*

(ii) Year 61, month *Caitra*, 23rd day, *Pūrvāsādha*

Dr Fleet is of opinion that the well-known Śaka era and the Kaniska era are but one and the same era Now the years 11 and 61 of the Śaka era are similar to the years 1925 and 1937 A D of our times in respect to luni-solar stellar aspects, and

(a) In 1925 A D , on July 26, the moon's *naksatra* was *U Phalgunī*, and it was the day of 5th *tithi* of light half of *Śrāvana*

(b) In 1937 A.D , on April 4, the moon's *naksatra* was *P Āsādhā*

But the 4th April, 1937 A D is shown in modern Hindu calendars as the 8th day of the dark half of *Phālguna* It may be observed, however, that the Vedic standard month of *Māgha*, came in the year 1935 from Feb 3 to March 5, and that no intercalary month would be reckoned in those days of pre-scientific Hindu astronomy within the next 2½ years from Feb 3, 1935, as was done in the present-day Hindu calendars from Sep 16 to Oct 15, in the year 1936 A D Hence the lunar month that was called lunar *Phālguna* in the modern calendar for 1937, was called the month of *Caitra* according to this old reckoning Hence from a purely astronomical standpoint, Kaniska's era and the well-known Śaka era may be identified with each other But this Śaka era, started from 78 A D , is perhaps to be associated with the death of a Śaka king as

[1] *MBh* , *Aśvamedha*, Ch 85 8 —

माघी च पौर्णमासीय मास' शेषो वृकोदर ॥

Brahmagupta says—"कलेर्गोऽगैकगुणाः (३१७९) शकान्तेऽब्दाः ." [1] The Kali years were 3179 (elapsed) at the death of the Saka king" Again Brahmagupta calls the years of the Saka era as "the years of the Saka kings (शकनृपाणाम् पञ्चाशत्संयुक्तैर्वर्षशतैः पञ्चभिरतीतैः ," [2] *i e*, when 550 years of the Saka kings had elapsed) Hence the regnal years of king Kaniska may not be the same as the years of the Saka era as used by the Hindu astronomers It seems likely that the Saka era was started with the death of the predecessor of Kaniska whose real accession to the throne came in the year 78 A D, while his regnal years were reckoned from the year of his coronation On this hypothesis Kaniska's regnal years or his era were started at a very short interval from 78 A D

In the *Paitāmaha Siddhānta* as summarised by Varāhamihira in his *Pañcasiddhāntikā*, the epoch used is the year 2 of the Saka kings [3] —

द्व्यूनं शकेन्द्रकालं पञ्चभिरुद्धृत्य शेषवर्षाणाम् ।
द्युगणं माघसिताद्यं कुर्यात् तदहरुदयात् ॥

"Deduct 2 from the year of the Saka kings, divide the result by 5, of the remaining years, find the *ahargana* from the beginning of the light half of *Māgha* starting from the sunrise of that day"

We can now readily show that we may take the regnal years of Kaniska to have been started from this year 2 of the Saka kings

On this hypothesis, we have,

the year 2 of Saka kings = 80 A D
the year 11 of Kaniska = 91 A D

The year 91 A D is similar to the 1927 A D of our time for the No of years lapsed = 1836, and $1836 = 160 \times 11 + 19 \times 4$ Hence the 20th day of *Āsādha* of the inscription is similar to Tuesday, the 2nd August, 1927 A D

Again the year 61 of Kaniska = 141 A D and the year in our time similar to 141 A D is readily seen to be 1939 A D, and

1 *B Sphutasiddhānta*, i, 26

2 *Ibid*, xxiv, 7

3 *Pañcasiddhāntikā*, xii, 2

that the date of the inscription corresponds to Tuesday, the 11th April, 1939 A D

Now the interval between 1939 A D and 1927 A D = 12 years, whereas between the year 11 and the year 61 of Kaniska the interval is 50 years Now as $50 = 19 \times 2 + 12$, the moon's phases near to the fixed stars which repeat in 50 years also do repeat in 12 years It is therefore quite consistent to take king Kaniska's regnal years to have been reckoned from the year 2 of the Saka kings

It now remains (*i*) to determine how and when the year of the Saka kings was taken to begin initially, (*ii*) why the lunar months were reckoned from the full-moon day itself, and (*iii*) to verify, by back calculation, the dates mentioned of the years 11 and 61 of Kaniska

With regard to the first point, we know that in Vedic times the year was taken to begin from the winter solstice day or from the day following, in the Vedāṅga period also, the year was begun from the winter solstice day As the time when the Śaka era came to be reckoned, was before that of Āryabhaṭa I (499 A D), we may reasonably assume that originally the Saka year also was begun from the winter solstice day

We assume further that the winter solstice day was correctly determined 5 years before the Saka year 2 or 80 A D The number of tropical years between 75 A D and 1900 A D = 1825, which comprise 666576 days nearly On applying these days backward to Dec 22, 1899 A D , we arrive at the date Dec 24, 74 A D , on which at—

G M Noon—	Hence on Dec 22, 74 A D , at G M N ,
Mean Sun = 270° 56′ 21″ 11	Mean Sun = 268° 58′ 4″ 45
,, Moon = 121° 15′ 31″ 75	Mean Moon = 94° 54′ 21″ 69
Lunar Perigee = 231° 39′ 49″ 94	L Perigee = 231° 26′ 27″ 83
Sun's Apogee = 69° 58′ 35″ 32	Appt Sun = 269° 38′
,, Eccentricity = 01747191	Appt Moon = 91° 44′ nearly

Thus on Dec 22, 74 A D the full-moon happened about 4 hours before G M N , and the sun reached the winter solstice in about 7 hours

This elucidates the points (i) and (ii), *viz*., that the Śaka year was initially taken to begin from the winter solstice day, and why the months were reckoned from the full-moon day itself. In 75 A.D., the mean longitude of *Pollux* was 86°31′, nearly; the moon at opposition on Dec. 22, 74 A.D., had the longitude of about 89°28′, *i.e.*, about 3° ahead of the star *Pollux*, and the day was that of the full-moon of *Pauṣa*, and similar in our times to that which happened on Jan. 15, 1930.

The actual starting of the era of Kaniska may have taken place, on our hypothesis, from the full-moon day of Dec. 26 of 79 A.D. as the first day of lunar *Pauṣa*. This agrees with the statement of the inscription that the *Vaiśākha māsa* had the first day on the day of the full-moon near the *Viśākhās*. We shall also show later on that the *Samvat* months were also full-moon ending.

Having thus shown why the era of Kaniska may be taken to have been started from the 26th December, 79 A.D., we now turn to determine the date for *Sam 11, Āṣādha māsa, di 20, Uttaraphalgunī*. Evidently the date was similar to Aug. 2, 1927 A.D. and between these years the interval was 1836 years, which comprise 670611 days nearly. We apply these days backward to Aug. 2, 1927 A.D. and arrive at the date, July 8, 91 A.D., and on July 7, 91 A.D. at G. M. N.,

Mean Sun = 104° 14′ 50″ 20	Hence—
,, Moon = 146° 41′ 3″ 90	Appt. Sun = 103° 7′
Lunar Perigee = 184° 37′ 5″ 67	,, Moon = 142° 36′
Sun's Apogee = 70° 15′ 31″ 87	and the "junction star"
,, Eccentricity = ·017466	*U. Phalgunī* = 144° 46′

Again 19 days before this date *i.e.*, on June 19, 91 A.D., at G. M. N.—

Mean Sun = 85° 31′ 11″ 93	Hence—
,, Moon = 256° 12′ 54 53	Apparent Sun = 85° 0′
Lunar Perigee = 182° 30′ 5″ 64	,, Moon = 261° 12′

Thus the full-moon happened about 8 hours later, and this was the first day of the month Hence the 8th of July, 91 A D was the 20th day of *Āsādha*, and it has been made clear that the moon on this day got conjoined with *β Leonis* or *Uttaraphalgunī* in the evening *The date of the inscription was thus July 8, 91 A.D*

Next as to the year 61 of Kaniska = Śáka year 63 = 141 A D, the moon on the 8th day of the dark half of *Caitra* was conjoined with the *naksatra Pūrvāsādhā* The day in question was similar to April 11, 1939 A D of our time The number of years between 141 A D and 1939 A D was 1798, and in 1798 sidereal years there are 656731 days These days applied backward to April 11, 1939 A D, lead us to the date—

March 17, 141 A D, on which at G M N,

Mean Sun = 353° 44′ 43″ 00	Hence—
,, Moon = 258° 15′ 1″ 12	Appt Sun = 355° 41′
Lunar Perigee = 46° 46′ 56″ 27	,, Moon = 254° 14′, and
Sun's Apogee = 71° 6′ 27″ 69	*P Āsādhā* = 248° 43′
,, Eccentricity = 017447	(*δ Sagittarii*)

Here the conjunction of the moon with *δ sagittarii* on this day was estimated in the previous night The day in question was of the 7th *tithi* according to the *siddhāntas*, and the day of the last quarter was the day following, but this day was the 8th day of the month

For on the 10th March, 141 A D, at G M N,

Mean Sun = 346° 50′ 44″ 70	Hence the full-moon had happened about 3 hrs earlier
,, Moon = 166° 0′ 55″ 92	
Lunar Perigee = 46° 0′ 9″ 50	

This was the full-moon day and the 1st day of *Caitra*, hence the 17th March was the 8th day of the month

Thus we see that the hypothesis that the era of King Kaniska was started from Dec 25 of 79 A D or from the year 2 of the Śáka era, satisfies all the conditions that arise from the dates given in the *Kharosthī* inscriptions, Group B, of Dr Konow The

present investigation shows that the Sáka emperor Kaniska lived at the beginning of the Sáka era, a view which, I hope, would be endorsed by all right-minded historians and it would not go against Dr Fleet When this solution of the problem is possible, we need not try to find others leading to other dates for the beginning of Kaniska's regnal years

Dr Van Wijk, the astronomical assistant to Dr Konow, has tried to show that the era of Kaniska was started from 128 A D, and would identify the regnal year 11 of Kaniska with 139 A D He based his calculation on the modern *Sūrya siddhānta*, which cannot be dated earlier than 499 A D Without examining his calculations we can say that his findings are vitiated by the following grounds —

(*a*) The *Caitra śuklādi* reckoning of the year as found in the modern *Sūrya siddhānta*, cannot be applicable to the early years of Sáka era and Kaniska's regnal years which were prior to 499 A D

(*b*) The word " day of the month " means simply a day and is not to be confounded with a *tithi* as used in the modern *Sūrya siddhānta*

(*c*) The word "*naksatra*" mentioned in these inscriptions meant very probably " star clusters " and not $\frac{1}{27}$th part of the ecliptic.

For these reasons I have used the most accurate or up-to-date equations for finding the sun and the moon's mean elements instead of following the *Sūrya siddhānta* The luni-solar periods used in this investigation are also most accurate and deduced from the constants as given by Newcomb and Brown It has been shown that the days of the month are also " days " and not *tithis* and *naksatras* mean " star clusters" and not equal divisions of the ecliptic I have taken the data from the inscriptions as actually observed astronomical events

It seems that Dr Van Wijk has done disservice to himself, to Dr Konow and to history by lowering the era of Kaniska, as to its beginning, to a very improbable date of about 128 A D In our opinion he should have made a thorough study of the history of Indian astronomy before making any chronological calculations for any date prior to 499 A D

CHAPTER XXIII

INDIAN ERAS

Earlier Era of the Kharosthī Inscriptions

We have in the preceding chapter shown that Kaniska succeeded to the throne most probably in the year 78 A D , and that his regnal years or his own era was started from 80 A D In the present chapter we shall try to ascertain the era or eras used in Dr Konow's list (A) in his *Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol I, page lxxxii, of the instances of dates of the earlier *Kharosthi* inscriptions This list contains 23 dates of the inscriptions, the 23rd states the year as

23 Skāra Dheri *Vasa ekunacaduśatime* (399), *Āsādha māsasa divase* 22.

In the Taxila copper plate of the year 78, the Greek month *Panemos* is used and stated as "*Panemasa māsa*" These 23 inscriptions record years serially from 58 to 399 It is for the archeologists to pronounce whether it would be rational to take all these instances as belonging to the same era One outstanding fact is the statement in No 23, that the year is mentioned as 399 Further the months are taken to begin on the full-moon day, the *Vaiśākha māsa* had its first day on the day of the full-moon near the *Viśākhās* Such a month in the strictly Indian calendar would be called *Jyaistha* (and not *Vaiśākha*) full-moon ending Hence the month of *Pausa* of these inscriptions began on the full-moon day of *Pausa* and ended on the day before the full-moon of *Māgha* The year of these inscriptions began as in the case of the Mālava and Śāka eras with the full-moon of *Pausa*, the types of *Pausa* of these were, of course, different

Now deducting 80 from 399, we arrive at the year at about 320 B C Again the shifting of the equinoxes and the solstices till 1940 A D becomes about 31° 24′ nearly Hence what was the longitude of the sun of 270° in the year 320 B C would in

year about 1940 A D , become 301° 21′ nearly, a longitude which the sun has on the 22nd of January nowadays

On looking up some of the recent calendars we find that there was a full-moon on January 23, 1932 Now the number of years from 320 B C to 1940 A D =2259 years and 2259=1939× 1+160×2 Hence 2259 sidereal years represent a complete luni-solar cycle comprising 825114 days We apply these days backward to January 23, 1932 A D and arrive at the date

December 26, 329 B C , on which at G M T 0 hr ,

Mean Sun =269°52′7″ 16,	Hence—
Mean Moon =90°59′59″ 31	Appt Sun=270°48′
Lunar Perigee =72°48′8″ 65.	Appt Moon=92°36 nearly
Sun's Apogee =63°7′11″	F M had happened about 3½
Sun's Eccentricity= 017613	hrs before and the sun reached
$2e=121' 098$, $\frac{9}{4}e^2 =1' 334$	the winter solstice 19 hrs before

Thus Dec 25, 329 B C , was a full-moon day according to the Indian mode of reckoning of those days, and it was the day of the winter solstice as well Hence the year could be begun astronomically from this date which was both a full-moon day and the day of winter solstice This means virtually starting the era from the year 328 B C , Jan 1 This year almost synchronised with the year of the Indian expedition of Alexander the Great If, however, it is considered that the year was started, not from the winter solstice day but from the day, following we find that—

On Dec 26, 310 B C , at G M N ,

Mean Sun =269°45′56″ 90,	
Mean Moon =88°35′38″ 90	Hence—
Lunar Perigee =125°56′19″ 55	Appt Sun =270°41′
Sun's Apogee =63° 26′47″	Appt Moon= 85°15′ nearly
Sun's Eccentricity=017613	

We readily see that the full-moon came in about 9 hrs more, and this date was the day following the winter solstice If the era, of which we want to find the beginning, was really started from such a correct determination of the winter solstice day on this 26th of Dec 310 B C The 1st day of lunar months would

be a full-moon day On the whole this date was most favourable for the starting of the era of the earlier *Kharosthī* inscriptions The usual practice, however, of beginning an era was to reckon it from 5 years later Hence the actual reckoning of the era was probably made from the full-moon day of about Dec 29, 305 B C

Now we know that Seleucus's era was contemplated from about 312 B C , and was actually started from the year 305 B C It would thus appear that the era which the earlier *Kharosthī* inscriptions use may in all probability have been this era

Hence—

The *Kharosthī* Inscription year—

58	represents	247 B.C
78	,,	227 B C
103	,,	202 B.C
136	,,	169 B C
187	,,	118 B C
384	,,	80 A D
399	,,	95 A D

The archaeologists alone may say if this determination represents the nearest approach to reality If we accept the hypothesis that the era used in these inscriptions is really the era of Seleucus Nikator, who in all probability is referred to as the Mahārājātirāja, there would be a slight overlapping of it with the era of Kaniska started from 80 A D , which is permissible If the *Kharosthī* inscriptions here use the era of Alexander the Great, this was probably started from about 327 A D , there would be no overlapping with Kaniska's era My own independent view is that Seleucus's era meets all the conditions of the era used in these inscriptions and the slight overlapping with Kaniska's era is permissible, as has been said before If Dr Konow has not really been able to get at a true chronological order in making up his List A, some of the inscriptions might belong to other eras of later beginning

Next we have to consider the interpretation of Dr Luders, who has opined that the era of Mahārājātirāja 292 or 299 was

really the Parthian era started from 248-247 B.C.[1] We have to differ from him. Kaniska's era could not have been started from 128 A.D. as has been shown in the preceding chapter. Dr. Van Wijk is wrong in his calculation. There was no one king in these days who was styled Mahārājarājatirāja. Kaniska was one and another was a Kusāna (Taxila silver scroll of the year 136). The title in its Greek form was very probably first assumed by Seleucus Nikator. The same title may have been assumed by or ascribed to the great Maurya Emperor Aśoka. Our results of calculation are set forth below.

On Dec. 26, 272 B.C., at G. M. T. 0 hr.,

Mean Sun=270° 3′ 10″ 72,	Hence—
,, Moon=90° 21′ 38″ 07,	Appt. Sun=270°57′,
Lunar Perigee=64° 6′	,, Moon=87°25′, nearly
Sun's Eccentricity= 017613	

It was the day following the winter solstice day, and the full-moon (of *Pausa*) came in about 7 hrs. more. Thus this date was quite suitable for the starting of a new era. The date shows a peculiar coincidence with that of Aśoka's accession to the Maurya Empire. The real starting of Aśoka's regnal years may have been started five years later, from about Dec. 29, 267 B.C. It is again not unlikely that an era may have been started by Chandragupta Maurya, the grandfather of Aśoka, from about,—321 A.D. We are here dealing with probabilities, but we must not forget that the last year recorded in the *Kharosthī* inscription of Skāra Dehri was the year 399, and there should not be much overlapping between the regnal years of Kaniska, and this older era of the *Kharosthī* inscriptions. Of Kaniska the first regnal year can not much move from 78 A.D., the zero year of the Śaka kings. The luni-solar phenomenon which led Dr. Van Wijk to identify the regnal year 11 of Kaniska with 139 A.D., was true also for the year 90 A.D. This would make the regnal years of Kaniska possible for being started from 79 A.D. It is well known that such luni-solar phenomena repeat in cycles of both 19 and 11 years. The 49 years which intervene between 139 A.D.

[1] Cf. *Ācārya puṣpāñjali*, published by the Indian Research Institute, Calcutta, 1940, page 288.

and 90 A D , comprise two cycles of 19 years and one cycle of 11 years There can thus never be any possibility for an absolute fixing of the date of any past event by such luni-solar phenomena or events We have also to respect the tradition and also to depend on the position of the equinoxes or of the solstices if either is discernible or can be settled Dr Konow and his astronomical assistant Dr Van Wijk have shown a total disregard for tradition and the latter has depended on a very slender evidence like a simple luni-solar event This can not but be called irrational and no chronologist would lend his support to such a finding

As to Dr Van Wijk's identifying the regnal years 11 and 61 of Kaniska with 139 A D and 189 A D , we can readily examine the validity thereof in the following way —

The luni-solar cycles according to the *Sūryasiddhānta* are 3, 8, 19, 122, 263, 385 and 648 years Hence the Christian years in present times which were similar to 139 A D and 189 A D are respectively 1923 A D and 1935 A D The day which corresponds to *Āsādha māsasa di 20 Uttaraphalgunī* of the regnal year 11 of Kaniska, was July 18, 1923 , while the date *Sam 6, Chetrasa māhasa divasea athamā di 8,* corresponds to March 28, 1935 From the calendars for these years it is clear that Dr Van Wijk has used the Indian full-moon ending lunar months in place of those which are directly indicated in the *Kharosthī* inscriptions On this point I invite the attention of the reader to the finding of Dr Konow quoted below —

" We are on safer grounds when we want to ascertain whether the months began with full or new moon The Zeda inscription of the year 11 is dated on the 20th of *Āsādha* and the *naksatra* is given as *Uttaraphalgunī* Prof Jacobi has kindly informed me of the fact that the *naksatra* belongs to the *Śukla paksa,* where it may occur between the fifth and the eighth day If, therefore, the twentieth day of the month falls in the beginning of the bright half, in our case the fifth day after the new-moon, the full-moon day must be the first day of the month

The same result can apparently be derived from the Takt-i-Bahi inscription, where the first *Vaiśākha* seems to be characterised as *(puña) paksa,* evidently because it was the

Buddha's birth-day, which tradition sometimes gives as the full-moon of *Vaiśākha* "[1]

If the first day of *Vaiśākha* was the full-moon day of *Vaiśākha*, then what is lunar *Vaiśākha* of the *Kharosthī* inscriptions would end on the day before the full-moon of *Jyaistha* Such a month is called in the Hindu calendar, not *Vaiśākha* but *Jyaistha* The corresponding dates in our own times of the 20th *Āṣādha Sam* 11, and the 8th of *Caitra* of *Sam* 61 of the inscriptions, which were taken respectively as July 18, 1927 and March 28, 1935, would show that Dr Van Wijk has misunderstood the meaning of these peculiar lunar months of the *Kharosthī* inscriptions

We understand that the earlier era of the *Kharosthi* inscriptions was really Seleucidean era reckoned from the year 311 B C The era may also be that of Chandragupta started from the year about 321 B C or it may also be that of Aśoka the Great, first determined from the year 272 B C, but started later on from 267 B C It cannot be Parthian era, as Kaniska's date of accession must be very near to the year 78 A D, and his regnal years in all probability started from 80 A D, the epoch of the *Paitāmahasiddhānta* As to Dr Luders's view on this point we can say that the donors of the Mathura inscription of the year 292 may be Greek, but the inscription was made intelligible for other people, *viz*, the Indian, the era in question may more likely be that of Chandragupta or of Aśoka the Great Too much overlapping of the two eras is, however, inadmissible The era in question most probably was the Seleucidean era

[1] Konow's Introduction to *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol II, p lxxxiv

CHAPTER XXIV

INDIAN ERAS

The Samvat or the Mālava Era

In this chapter it is proposed to discuss three points in relation to the Mālava or the Samvat era (i) how it was started initially with the mode of reckoning the year, (ii) why it is called *Krta* era and (iii) why in the Mālava or the Vikrama Samvat 529, on the second day of the lunar month of *Tapasya* or *Phālguna*, the Indian season of spring is said to have already set in, as we have it in Fleet's Gupta Inscriptions, Plate No 18

This era, which is at present better known as the Vikrama Samvat, has its year-beginning from the light half of lunar *Caitra* according to the rule of the scientific *siddhāntas* or treatises on astronomy, all of which are of different dates which cannot be earlier than 499 A D In the preceding chapters, it has been shown that from the earliest Vedic times, the year was taken to begin from the winter solstice day, the *Vedāngas* also followed the same rule It was perhaps so, also with Christian era initially We now proceed to discover how this Mālava or the Samvat era was started initially, on this hypothesis, from the winter solstice day

Initial Starting of the Era

Now, 1997 of Samvat era = 1940-41 of the Christian era
0 year of Samvat era = —57 of the Christian era
= 58 B C

From 58 B C to 1940 A D, the mean precession rate was = 50″ 0370 per year, and in 1997 years, the total precession of the equinoxes and solstices has been = 27°45′24″ nearly Hence what was 270° of the longitude of the sun about 58 B C, is now about 297°45′27″, which is the present-day longitude of the sun about the 19th of January

Now, 1997 years = 1939 yrs + 19 × 3 years + 1 yr Hence we get an accurate luni solar cycle of 1996 years Further 1996 sidereal years = 729052 days nearly We apply these days backward to Jan 20, 1939 A D and arrive at —

(1) The date, Dec 25, 59 B C, on which at G M N,

Mean Sun = 270° 55′ 29″ 86,
,, Moon = 260° 51′ 57″ 65,
Lunar Perigee = 260° 10′ 8″ 99

Here the new-moon fell on the the 26th December and not on the winter solstice day which was the 24th December It is unlikely the Samvat year reckoning had its origin from such a new-moon day

(2) Secondly a full-moon happened on Jan 19, 1935 A D, then by a process similar to that shown above we arrive at —

The date, Dec 25, 63 B C, on which at G M N,

Mean Sun = 270° 53′ 39″ 15,
,, Moon = 90° 12′ 12″ 27,
Lunar Perigee = 97° 22′ 56″ 91,
Sun's Apogee = 67° 39′ 21″ 69
,, Eccentricity = 0175223

The full-moon no doubt happened on this date, but it was the day following the winter solstice If year-reckoning was started on the basis of the correctly ascertained winter solstice day of this year, the lunar months would be reckoned to begin from the full-moon day of the lunar *Pausa*, as in the *Kharosthī* inscriptions, as we shall see later on The distinguishing character of this *Pausa* was that the full-moon was conjoined with the 'junction star' *Punarvasu* (*β Geminorum*) very nearly. We, however, try to find the full-moon or the new-moon which happened exactly on the winter solstice day

(3) We go up by 8 years or 99 lunations from Dec 26, 59 B C, and arrive at —

The date, Dec 24, 67 B C, on which at G.M N,

Mean Sun = 269° 52′ 40″ 10,	
Mean Moon = 266° 18′ 52″ 09,	The corresponding
Lunar Perigee = 294° 29′ 57″ 00,	date in our time—
Sun's Apogee = 67° 35′ 19″	Jan 19, 1931
,, Eccentricity = 017524	

Here the new-moon happened on the day following, *i e.*, on the 25th Dec , the day after the winter solstice

(4) We next go up by 8 years or 99 lunations from Dec 25, 63 B C and arrive at —

The date Dec 24, 71 B C , on which at G M N ,

Mean Sun = 269° 50′ 53″ 49,	The corresponding
,, Moon = 95° 36′ 6″ 54,	date in our time—
Lunar Perigee = 131° 43′ 18″ 00	Jan 17, 1927

Here the full-moon and the sun's reaching the winter solstice fell on the same day, and the full-moon was conjoined with the ' junction star ' of *Punarvasu* or *β Geminorum*, and this was the distinguishing mark of the winter solstice day The practice was, probably, to intercalate one lunar month occasionally on the return of the similar full-moon near *β Geminorum* This is on the assumption that the year was begun from the dark half of *Pausa*

(5) Lastly to finally examine if the new-moon and the winter solstice fell on the same date, we find that on —

The date Dec 23, 75 B C , at G M N ,

Mean Sun=268° 49′ 57″ 16	The corresponding date
Mean Moon=271° 42′ 46″ 21	in our time—
Lunar Perigee=328° 49′ 58″ 00	Jan 17, 1923 A D

The new-moon happened on this day but it was the day before the winter solstice.

On the whole it is not impossible to infer that the year of the Samvat era used also to be reckoned from the light half of *Māgha*, *i e* , from a day which was like the new-moon day of Jan 17, 1923 of our time , the distinguishing character of this *Māgha* was that its first quarter was conjoined with *β Arietis*, the

'junction star' of the *naksatra Aśvinī* Perhaps the Indian orthodox reckoning also started from the light half of the lunar *Māgha* of this type, while the *Kharosthī* inscriptions have the reckoning from the very full-moon day itself of lunar *Pausa*, with the distinguishing feature found in (2) and (4)

The winter solstice day which just preceded the year 58 B C, was the 24th Dec, 59 B C The new-moon near this date fell on the 26th. It appears that the Samvat or rather the Mālava era did not actually begin with 58 B C, but most probably from 57 B C, and that Samvat years are not years elapsed, but are, like the Christian years, the current ones This will be clear from the next topic dealt with, *viz*,

(ii) *Why the Samvat Years are called Krta Years*

The oldest name of the Samvat years was also *Krta* years, as has been noticed by all the Indian archaeologists from Dr Fleet up to Dr D R Bhandarkar and others of later times We propose to find the reasons thereof in this part of the chapter

(1) According to all Indian Calendars, the *Krtayuga* began (*a*) on a Sunday which was (*b*) the third day of the of the lunar *Vaiśākha* and (*c*) on which the moon was conjoined with the *Krttikās* or *Pleiades* according to the *Purānas*

The *Matsya Purāna* says

वैशाखमासि शुक्लाया तृतीयाया जनार्दनः ।
यवानुत्पादयामास युगञ्चकृतवान् कृतम् ॥

"God Visnu caused barley to ripen on the third day of the light half of lunar *Vaiśākha* and started the *Krtayuga*"

The same *Purāna* also says

वैशाख शुक्लपक्षे तु तृतीयायैरूपोषिता ।
अक्षयंफलमाप्नोति सर्वस्यसुकृतस्य च ॥
सा तथा कृत्तिकोपेता विशेषेण सुपूजिता ।
तत्र दत्तं हुतं जप्त सर्वमक्षयमुच्यते ॥ Ch 65, 2-3

"Those people who have fasted on the third day of the light half of lunar *Vaiśākha*, would earn inexhaustible merit for it and for all other good deeds If this day be the one on which the moon is conjoined with the *Krttikās* (*Pleiades*), it is the most valued of

all whatever be given away either as charity or as oblations to the gods, or whatever be done by repeating the prayer, has been declared by the wise as of unending religious merit "

The first signal for the beginning of the *Krta* era, therefore, was that the day should be the third of the light half of lunar *Vaiśākha*, should be a Sunday and should also be the day on which the moon was conjoined with the *Pleiades* group

The second signal for the beginning of the *Krtayuga* according to the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas*[1] was

यदाचन्द्रश्च सूर्य्यश्च तथा तिष्यवृहस्पती ।
एकराशौ समेष्यन्ति प्रपत्स्यते तदाकृतम् ॥

" The *Krtayuga* would begin when the sun, moon, Jupiter and the *naksatra tisya* (*Pusyā*) would come into one cluster (*rāśi*) "

Astronomically speaking, the condition for both these aspects to happen in one year for the beginning of the *Krtayuga*, would not perhaps lead to any single solution, but we are here to look for a year near about 57 B C , in which both these events occurred That year has come out from my investigation to have been the year 63 B C

(1) In this year, the lunar *Caitra* ended on March 20, 63 B C

(*a*) On this day, at G M N ,

Mean Sun = 354° 54′ 48″ 57,	Hence—
,, Moon = 360° 43′ 45″ 69,	Appt Moon = 356°7′
Lunar Perigee = 66° 11′ 49″ 71,	,, Sun = 356°49′
Sun's Apogee = 67° 39′	
,, Eccentricity = 017522	

The new-moon happened at about 6-30 p m of Ujjayinī mean time

(*b*) On March 21, 63 B C , at G M N ,

Mean Sun = 355° 53′ 56″ 90	Hence—
,, Moon = 13° 53′ 20″ 72,	Appt Moon = 10° 17′
Lunar Perigee = 66° 18′ 30″ 76	,, Sun = 357° 48′

The first *tithi* of the *siddhāntas* was over about 4 p m , of Ujjayinī mean time, and the crescent moon was visible after sunset most probably

[1] *Mbh* , *Vana*, 190, 90 91

(c) On Sunday, March 22, 63 B C (J D = 1698493), at G M N,

Mean Sun = 356° 53′ 4″ 23,	Hence—
,, Moon = 27° 9′ 55″ 75,	Appt Moon = 24° 37′,
Lunar Perigee = 66° 25′ 11″ 81	,, Sun = 358° 46′,

and the *Krttikā* (η *Tauri*) = 31° 26′ nearly

The *siddhāntic* second *tithi* was over at about 1-20 p m of Ujjayinī mean time According to the state of Hindu astronomy of that time the second day of the lunar *Vaiśākha* was taken to end with the setting of the moon on this Sunday evening, and the third day began When both the moon and the *Krttikā* cluster became visible after sunset, they were separated by about 6° of longitude It could be thus inferred that the moon would overtake the *Krttikās* in about half a day This was probably regarded as the first signal for the beginning of the *Krtayuga*

If we think that the connecting of the day of the week, *viz*, Sunday, in the signal for the *Krtayuga* to begin, was a later addition, we have one further aspect to consider, that on the day following, the sun reached the **Vernal equinox** and this was the third day of the light half of *Vaiśākha* This event was perhaps a more forceful signal for the beginning of the *Krtayuga*

As to a very early use of the days of the week in the Hindu calendar, we have the following well-known passage in the *Hitopadeśa*

"सखे स्नायुनिर्मिता एते पाशाः तदद्य भट्टारकवारे कथमेतान् दन्तैः स्पृशामि ।"

" Friend, these strings (of the net) are made of guts, how can I then touch them with my teeth to day which is a Sunday ?" The rule was " No meat on Sundays " But we can not be sure of the date of the *Hitopadeśa*

It is thus not quite rational for us to assume that the week-days were reckoned in the Hindu calendar about the year 57 B C But it is clear that the event of the sun's reaching the vernal equinox on the third day of lunar *Vaiśākha* would be regarded as of very special significance for the coming of the *Krtayuga*

(2) Secondly this year, 63 B C, was perhaps called the beginning of the *Krtayuga* for the coming of another astronomical event in it

On June 16, 63 B C, at G M N, we had—

Mean Sun = 81° 38′ 59″ 72,	Hence—
,, Moon = 80° 20′ 8″ 16,	Appt Moon = 80° 45′
Lunar Perigee = 76° 0′ 2″ 58,	,, Sun = 81° 11′
Sun's Apogee = 67° 39′,	Jupiter as corrected by the
Mean Jupiter = 80° 52′ 26″ 87,	equation of apsis,
Jupiter's Perihelion = 341° 34′ 32″,	= 85° 54′ 54″
,, Eccentricity = 0443845	*v Cancri* = 97° 5′

Jupiter had set already and the new-moon happened in the *naksatra Punarvasu*, the Jovial year begun was thus *Pausa* or *Mahāpausa* The longitude of the oldest first point of the Hindu sphere was about, −6° in this year and consequently the longitude of the first point of the *Pusyā* division was = 87°20′ Jupiter was very near to this point It may thus be inferred that the signal from Jupiter's position as to the beginning of the *Krtayuga* was taken to occur on this date, *viz*, June 16, 63 B C

Again on July 16, 63 B C, at G M T 0 hr, or exactly one synodic month later—

Mean Sun = 110° 43′ 37″ 39,	Hence—
,, Moon = 109° 2′ 21″ 48,	Appt Moon = 110° 57′,
Lunar Perigee = 79° 17′ 13″ 71,	,, Sun = 109° 23′,
Mean Jupiter = 83° 19′ 35″ 21	Jupiter as corrected by the eqn of apsis = 88° 19′

On this day also the sun, moon, Jupiter and the *naksatra Pusyā* were in the same cluster This day also most probably afforded another signal for the coming of the *Krtayuga* Jupiter had become heliacally visible about 10 days before

If we go forward by 12 lunations from the above date, we arrive at July 5, 62 B C, on which, at G M N,

Mean Sun	= 100° 8′ 20″ 52,
,, Moon	= 100° 4′ 19″ 20,
,, Jupiter	= 112° 47′ 44″ 98
δ *Cancri*	= 100° 4′ nearly

Here was another combination of the planets, which might have persuaded men that the *Krtayuga* had begun

On the whole it is thus established that both the luni-solar, and the luni-solar-Jovial-stellar combined signals for the beginning of the *Krtayuga*, could be observed and estimated in the year 63 B C In this year the sun's reaching the winter solstice happened on Dec 24, and the full-moon

day of *Pausa* was the day following it The actual starting of the *Krta*, *Mālava* or the *Samvat* era was made 5 years later from the full-moon day of about the 28th Dec, 58 B C The *Samvat* year 1 was thus almost the same as 57 B C, and that the number of the *Samvat* era represents the current year as in the Christian era Further the lunar months here are full-moon ending as originally in the Śaka era, as we have seen in the preceding chapters The year was reckoned from the full-moon day of *Pausa* In 499 A D or some years later than this date, the *Caitra Śuklādi* reckoning was followed according to the rule of Āryabhata But in the *Samvat* era, we are told that the lunar months are still reckoned as full-moon ending, which is now a case of a queer combination of opposites We next turn to solve the last problem from the epigraphic source in relation to this era

Mālava Samvat 529, the Second Day of the Light Half of Phālguna and the Beginning of Spring

In Fleet's Gupta Inscriptions, Plate No 18, it is stated that spring had set in on the second day of the light half of *Phālguna* of the Mālava *Samvat* 529 or 473 A D Now the year in our time which was similar to 529 of the Malava era was 1932 A D, and the date, to March 9, 1932 Elapsed years till this date was=1459 sidereal years=18046 lunations=5320909 days These days are applied backward to March 9, 1932 A D, and we arrive at the date —

Feb 15, 473 A D, on which, at the Ujjayinī mean midnight,

Mean Sun	=326° 58′ 28″ 09,	Hence—
,, Moon	=355° 57′ 22″ 72,	Appt Sun=328° 48′ 24″,
Lunar Perigee	=233° 43′ 28″ 68,	,, Moon=360° 20′
Sun's Apogee	= 76° 46′ 14″ 81,	nearly
,, Eccentricity	= 017323	

Now the Indian spring begins, when the sun's longitude becomes 330°, which happened about 30 hours later, *i e*, on the 17th Feb, 473 A D The local conditions probably brought in spring earlier

Again 2 5 days before Feb 15, 473 A D, at Ujjayinī mean midnight, or on the 13th February, 473 A D at Ujjayinī mean midday —

Mean Sun	=324° 30′ 47″ 25,
Mean Moon	=323° 0′ 55″ 12,
Lunar Perigee	=233° 26′ 46″ 04

It appears that the new-moon had happened about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hrs before, and the first visibility of the crescent took place on the evening of the next day, the 14th Feb Thus Feb 15 was the second day of the month, as stated in the inscription

We now proceed to consider why there has been an error in estimating the beginning of spring, which according to an old rule should come 60 days after the winter solstice day We find that 60 days before this date, *viz*, Feb 15, or, on —

Dec 17, 472 A D, at Ujjayini mean midday,

Mean Sun	=267° 20′ 37″,
,, Moon	=284° 48′ 4″,
Lunar Perigee	=226° 59′ 5″

The estimated winter solstice day was thus premature by about two days On this day, the first visibility of the crescent took place in the evening Hence the second day of the light half of *Phālguna* was the estimated beginning of spring, *i e*, 60 days later The new-moon happened on the 16th December and the real winter solstice day was the 19th December

This inscription shows that the Gupta era cannot be identified with the *Samvat* era The point that why or how the Mālava era came to be called Vikrama *Samvat* cannot be answered from any astronomical data,

Note —We have here tried to interpret the astronomical statement of the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumara Gupta and Bandhuvarman The date of the inscription found here as Feb 15, 473 A D, was that of the thorough repair and decoration of the sun temple at Mandasor (24°3′N and 75°8′E) The inscription says that spring has set in

CHAPTER XXV

INDIAN ERAS

The Gupta Era

In the present chapter, it is proposed to determine the beginning of the era of the Gupta emperors of northern India. Dr Fleet in his great book *Inscriptionum Indicarum* Vol III, has published a collection of the Gupta inscriptions. In order to verify the dates in those inscriptions he had the assistance of the late Mr S B Dīksita of Poona and his calculations led Dr Fleet to conclude that the Gupta era began from 319-21 A D[1] This indefinite statement or inference is not satisfactory. Mr Dīksita was also not able to prove that the Gupta and Valabhī eras were but one and the same era[2] Of recent years some have even ventured to prove that the Gupta era is to be identified with the *Samvat* or Mālava era. Hence it has become necessary to try to arrive at a definite conclusion on this point, *viz* , the true beginning of the Gupta era.

The tradition about this era is recorded by Alberunī, which is equivalent to this —From the Śaka year, deduct 241 the result is the year of the Gupta kings and that the Gupta and Valabhī eras are one and the same era[3] Now the Śaka era and the *Samvat* or Mālava era are generally taken to begin from the light half of lunar *Caitra*. As has been stated already, it is extremely controversial to assume if this was so at the times when these eras were started.

From the earliest Vedic times and also from the *Vedānga* period, we have the most unmistakable evidences to show that the calendar year, as distinguished from the sacrificial year, was

1 Fleet—*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol III (Gupta Inscriptions), page 127

2 S B Dīksita, भारतीय ज्योतिःशास्त्र, page 375 (1st Edn)

3 Sachau s Alberuni, Vol II, page 7—" The epoch of the era of the Guptas falls, like that of the Valabha era, 241 years later than the *Śakakāla* "

started either from the winter solstice day or from the day following it The so-called *Caitra-Śuklādi* reckoning started the year from the vernal equinox day or from the day following it So far as we can see from a study of the history of Indian astronomy, we are led to conclude that this sort of beginning the year was started by Āryabhata I from 499 A D The great fame of Āryabhata I, as an astronomer, led all the astronomers and public men of later times to follow him in this respect We start with the hypothesis that the Gupta era was originally started from the winter solstice day and that initially the year of the era more correctly corresponded with the Christian year, than with the *Caitra Suklādi* Śaka year

Now the year 241 of the Śaka era is equivalent to 319-20 A D We assume that the Gupta era started from the winter solstice day preceding Jan 1, 319 A D The elapsed years of the Gupta era till 1940 A D , becomes 1621 years and $1621 = 160 \times 10 + 19 + 2$ Hence the starting year of the era was similar to 1938 A D Now the mean precession rate from 319 to 1938 A D $= 50'' 0847$ per year Hence the total shifting of the solstices becomes till 1938 A D $= 22° 31' 27'' 54$ Thus what was 270° of the longitude of the sun, should now become 291° 31′ nearly—a longitude which the sun now has about the 13th of January On looking up some of the recent calendars we find that —

(a) In the year 1922, there was a full-moon on Jan 13
(b) ,, ,, ,, 1937, ,, ,, a new-moon on Jan 12

We apply the elapsed years 1619 (sidereal) backward to Jan 12, 1937 A D , and arrive at the date —

Dec 20, 317 A D , on which, at G M N , or Ujjayinī M T 5-4 p m ,

Mean Sun	$= 269° \ 5' 11'' 26$,	Hence $2e$	$= 119' 5016$,
,, Moon	$= 272° 39' 40'' 40$,	$\frac{5}{4}e^2$	$= 1' 2981$,
Lunar Perigee	$= 39° \ 50' 37'' 25$,	Appt Sun	$= 269°37'$
A Node	$= 257° 44' 29° 88$,	,, Moon	$= 268°52'$ nearly
Sun's Apogee	$= 74° \ 7' 25° 16$,		
,, Eccentricity	$= 0173808$		

The moon overtook the sun in about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours and the sun reached the winter solstice in about 9 hours Hence Dec 20, 317 A D , was a new-moon day and also the day of winter solstice

according to the ordinary mode of Indian reckoning As this day was similar to Jan 12, 1937 A D , *viz* , lunar *Agrahāyana* ended, it appears that the Gupta era was started from about the 21st Dec , 318 A D , and this was the 12th day of lunar *Pausa* It must be remembered in this connection, that the distinguishing character of the lunar *Agrahāyana*, with which the year ended at the end of a correct luni-solar cycle, was that the last quarter of the moon was very nearly conjoined with *Citrā (Spica* or *a Virginis)* [1] In our opinion this character of the month was used for the intercalation of a lunar month at the end of a correct luni-solar cycle We now proceed to examine the dates given in the Gupta Inscriptions as collected together by Dr Fleet in his great book on the subject

I The First Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

शते पञ्चषष्ट्यधिके (१६५) वर्षाणाम् भूपतौ च बुधगुप्ते आषाढ़ मास शुक्लद्वादश्यां सुरगुरोर्दिवसे ।[2]

The inscription says that the 12th *tithi* of the light half of lunar *Āsādha* of the Gupta year 165 fell on a Thursday We examine this by both the modern and the *Siddhāntic* methods

(A) By the Modern Method

The year 165 of the Gupta kings is similar to the year 1924 A D The elapsed years till this date=1440 sidereal years= 525969 days We increase the number of days by 1 and divide it by 7 , the remainder is 4, which shows that the inscription statement of Thursday agrees with the Sunday of July 13, 1924 A D

We next apply 525969 days backward to July 13, 1924, and arrive at the date June 21, 484 A D , the date of the inscription

This date was 14 15 Julian centuries + 181 25 days before Jan. 1, 1900 A D Hence—

On June 21, 484 A D , at G M N ,

Mean Sun	= 91° 12′ 50″ 61,	Hence—
,, Moon	=235° 7′ 53″ 42,	$2c$=119′ 0561
Lunar Perigee	=335° 23′ 2″ 80,	$\frac{5}{4}c^2$=1′ 290
A Node	=277° 14′ 51″ 51,	
Sun's Apogee	= 76° 14′ 32″,	
,, Eccentricity	= 0173175	

[1] *Cf* the longitude of the moon on Jan 4, 1937 A D , at L Q with that of *a Virginis*

[2] Fleet's—Gupta Inscriptions, page 80, Eran Inscription

From these we readily find the same mean places at the preceding Ujjayinī mean midnight. Hence—

On June 20, 484 A.D., at Ujjayinī mean midnight,

Mean Sun	= 90° 30′ 47″.38,	Appt. Sun	= 90° 2′,
,, Moon	=225° 45′ 41″.78,	,, Moon	=219° 47′ nearly
Lunar Perigee	=335° 18′ 17.61,		
A. Node	=277° 17′ 7″.08.		

Thus at the Ujjayinī mean midnight of the day before (Wednesday), the 11th *tithi* was current, and next day, *Thursday*, had at sun rise the 12th *tithi* of the lunar month of *Āsādha*.

(B) According to the method of the *Khandakhādyaka* of Brahmagupta, the *Kali ahargana* on this Wednesday at the Ujjayinī mean midnight was=1309545. Hence—

Mean Sun	= 91° 3′ 4″,
,, Moon	=226° 23′ 17″,
Lunar Perigee	=335° 42′ 56″,
A. Node	=277° 35′ 17″.

The above two sets of the mean elements for the same instant are in fair agreement. *Hence the date of the inscription is Thursday, June 21, 484 A.D., and the Zero year of the Gupta era is thus 319 A.D. We are here in agreement with Dīksita's finding.*

II. The Second Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

श्रीविश्वनाथ प्रतिवद्ध नोजनानां वोधक रसुल महम्मद संवत् ६६२ तथा श्रीनृप विक्रम संवत् १३२० तथा श्रीमद् वलभी संवत् ९४५ आषाढ़ वदि १३ रवौ अद्य इह ।[1]

Here the *Hijrī* year 662 shows the Vikrama *Samvat* is expressed in elapsed years as 1320, and as it is now reckoned it should be 1321. The Valabhi *Samvat* 945 is the same as the Gupta *Samvat* 945, in which the 13th *tithi* of the dark half of *Jyaistha* fell on a Sunday.

Now the mean *Khandakhādyaka ahargana*

$$
\begin{array}{lr}
 & =218878 \\
\text{from which we deduct} & \underline{30} \\
 & 211848,
\end{array}
$$

which we accept as the correct *ahargana* and is exactly divisible

[1] Fleet—Guptā Inscriptions, page 84, Veraval Inscription.

by 7, and which was true for Saturday of *Āsādha vadi* 12 of the Gupta era 945 The English date for this Saturday was May 25, 1264 A D On the next day, Sunday, the date was, May 26, 1264 A D , the date of the inscription

From the above apparent *ahargana* for May, 25, 1264 A D , which was a Saturday, at the Ujjayinī mean midnight, we have

Mean Sun = 1ˢ 27° 12′ 48″,
,, Moon = 0ˢ 27° 31′ 40″,
Lunar Apogee = 6ˢ 20° 29′ 1″ (with Lalla's correction)
A Node = 9ˢ 29° 53′ 4″ (Do Do Do)
Hence, Appt Sun = 1ˢ 28° 21′ 57″,
,, Moon = 0ˢ 28° 8′ 44″,
Moon – Sun = 10ˢ 29° 46′ 47″
= 27 *tithis* + 5° 46′ 47″

Thus at the midnight (U M T) of the Saturday ended, about 11 hrs of the 13th *tithi* of the dark half of *Jyaistha* were over and 13 hrs nearly of it remained Thus the current *tithi* of the next morning of Sunday was also the 13th of the dark half of *Jyaistha* which is called *Āsādha vadi* 13

In the present case the Valabhi or Gupta year 945=1264 A D Hence also the Gupta era began from 319 A D , and we are in agreement with Dīksita

III The Third Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

९२७ वर्षे फाल्गुन सुदि २ सोम । [1]

It is here stated that in the Gupta or Valabhī year 927, the 2nd *tithi* of the light half of *Phālguna* fell on a Monday The English date becomes 1246 A D , Feb 19 Saka year was 1167 years + 11 months + 2 *tithis*, the Gupta year being taken to have been reckoned from the light half of lunar *Pausa*

[1] Fleet's Gupta Inscriptions, page 90, Veraval Inscription

The true *Khandakhādyka ahargana* becomes = 212179 at Ujjayinī mean midnight of monday, when

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Mean Sun} &= 10^s\ 24^\circ\ 43'\ 44'', \\ \text{,, Moon} &= 11^s\ 24^\circ\ 26'\ 37'', \\ \text{Lunar Apogee} &= 6^s\ 3^\circ\ 20'\ 53'', \\ \text{A Node} &= 2^s\ 1^\circ\ 59'\ 40'' \end{aligned}$$

Hence on the same date at 6 a m , Ujjayinī M T ,

Mean Sun = $10^s\ 23^\circ\ 59'\ 23''$,	Thus—
Sun's Apogee = $2^s\ 17^\circ\ 0'\ 0''$,	Appt Sun = $325^\circ\ 59'\ 2''$,
Mean Moon = $11^s\ 14^\circ\ 33'\ 41''$,	,, Moon = $312\ \ 56'\ 51''$
Lunar Apogee = $6^s\ 3^\circ\ 15'\ 52''$	

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Moon} - \text{Sun} &= 16^\circ\ 57'\ 25'' \\ &= 1\ \textit{tithi} + 4^\circ\ 57'\ 25'' \end{aligned}$$

On this Monday, the *tithi* was the second of the light half of lunar *Phālguna*, while the sun's longitude shows that the Bengali date was the 24th of solar *Phālguna* We are here in agreement with Dīksita

In this case also calculation by the modern methods is unnecessary as the time was later than of Brahmagupta It should be noted that the old year-reckoning from the light half of *Pausa* persists inspite of Āryabhata I's rule of reckoning it from the light half of *Caitra* Here also 927 of the Gupta Era =1246 A D

Zero year of the Gupta Era = 319 A D

IV The Fourth Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

३३० गुप्त सवत ह्मिार्गशीर शुदि २ ।[1]

This states that the Gupta year 330 had at its end the second *Agrahāyana* Here, the Gupta year 330, up to *Agrahāyana*, the time by the *Caitra-Suklādi* Saka era would be 570 years + 9 months

According to the *Khandakhādyaka* of Brahmagupta the total *Kali-solar* days up to 570 of Saka elapsed + 9 months = 1349910, in which we get $1383\frac{12}{976}$ intercalary months, i e , 1383 exact intercalary months by the mean rate, which tends to show that there was a second lunar *Agrahāyana* at this time But this explanation appears unsatisfactory If we follow the

[1] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, page 92, the Kaira (22°45′N, 72°15′E) Grant

method of the *Siddhāntas* there can be no intercalary month in the solar month of *Agrahāyana*, of which the length as found by Warren is less than that of a lunar month [2] We have also examined it carefully and found that in the present case this could not happen We have then to examine it another way

On Dec 20 of the year 317 A D , there was a new-moon with which the lunar *Agrahāyana* ended and the sun turned north The character of this lunar *Agrahāyana* was that the last quarter was conjoined with *Citrā* or *α Virginis* The Gupta era was started one year later than this date, from the 20th Dec , 318 A D The year 330 of the Gupta era was thus the year which ended about Dec 20, 648 A D and the number of years elapsed was $=331=160\times 2+11$

Thus 331 years was a fairly complete luni-solar cycle, and comprised 120898 days Again 577825 days before Jan 1, 1900 A D , was the date Dec 20, 317 A D Hence applying 120898 days forward to this date, we arrive at the date Dec 20, 648 A D , on which the new-moon happened with which the lunar *Agrahāyana* ended this year

Now on the day of the last quarter of this month or the *astakā* which fell on the 13th Dec , 648 A D , the moon was conjoined with *Citrā* or *α Virginis*, in the latter part of the night

On this day, at G M N , we had—

Mean Sun $=264°\ 57'\ 0''\cdot 47$,	Hence—
,, Moon $=180°\ 14'\ 22''\ 10$,	Apparent Sun $=265°\ 8'$
Lunar Perigee $=188°\ 32'\ 34''\ 17$,	,, Moon $=179°\ 10'$,
Sun's Apogee $=\ 79°\ 46'\ 40''\ 79$	Long of *α Virginis* $=185°$ nearly
$2e=118'\ 7$, $\frac{5}{4}e^2=1'\ 398$	

From these calculations it follows that the last lunar month of the year, was the second *Agrahāyana* as this month completed the luni-solar cycle of 331 years

The date of the inscription, being the second day of the second *Āgrahāyana*, was *the 22nd of November, 648 A D* With this second *Agrahāyana* which ended on the 20th Dec ,

[2] Length of Solar *Agrahāyana*=29*da* 30*n* 21v 2iii 33iv (Burgess—*S Siddhānta*, xiv, 3)

Length of Lunar month =29*da* 31*n* 50v 6iii 53iv (acc to the *Khandakhādyaka*),

648 A D, the year 330 of the Gupta era ended *It must be admitted that the inscription as it has been read or as it was executed was slightly defective In this case also Āryabhata I's Caitra-Śuklādi reckoning is not followed*

Here *330 of the Gupta era = 649 A D.*

Zero of the ,, ,, = 319 A D

V Morvi Copper Plate Inscription

पञ्चाशीत्यायुतेऽतीते समानां शतपञ्चके ।
गौप्ते ददावदोनृपः सोपरागेऽर्कमण्डले ॥
संवत् ५८५ फाल्गुन सुदि ५ ।

This inscription says that on the day of the 5th *tithi* of the light half of lunar *Phālguna* of the Gupta year 585, the king of the place Morvi (22° 49′ N and 70° 53′ E) made a gift at the time of a solar eclipse, which happened some time before this date, on which the deed of gift, *viz*, the copper plate in question, was executed

To find the date of this copper plate, had been a pit-fall for Dr Fleet, who mistook that the solar eclipse in question happened on the 7th May, 905 A D Now the year 585 of the Gupta should be 904 A D and the date of execution of the plate should be Feb 20, 904 A D We looked for the solar eclipse, two lunations + 5 days before and 8 lunations + 5 days before this date Although there happened the two solar eclipses at these times, they were not visible in India

We find, however, that here the Gupta year is reckoned not from the light half of *Pausa*, but from the light half of *Caitra* according to Āryabhata I's rule Here the year 585 of the Gupta era = 826 of the *Caitra-Śuklādi* Śaka era = 904-905 A D, or the Zero year of the Gupta era = 319-20 A D the date of the inscription corresponds to March 3, 1941 A D, and the elapsed years till this date = 1036 years = 12814 lunations = 378405 days The date of the copper plate works out to have been *Feb 12, 905 A D* The eclipse referred to in the inscription happened on

[1] Finally accepted by Fleet—Indian Antiquary, Nov, 1891, page 382 S B. Diksita did actually find it

method of the *Siddhāntas* there can be no intercalary month in the solar month of *Agrahāyana*, of which the length as found by Warren is less than that of a lunar month [2] We have also examined it carefully and found that in the present case this could not happen We have then to examine it another way

On Dec 20 of the year 317 A D , there was a new-moon with which the lunar *Agrahāyana* ended and the sun turned north The character of this lunar *Agrahāyana* was that the last quarter was conjoined with *Citrā* or *a Virginis* The Gupta era was started one year later than this date, from the 20th Dec , 318 A D The year 330 of the Gupta era was thus the year which ended about Dec 20, 648 A D and the number of years elapsed was $=331=160\times 2+11$

Thus 331 years was a fairly complete luni-solar cycle, and comprised 120898 days Again 577825 days before Jan 1, 1900 A D , was the date Dec 20, 317 A D Hence applying 120898 days forward to this date, we arrive at the date Dec 20, 648 A D , on which the new-moon happened with which the lunar *Agrahāyana* ended this year

Now on the day of the last quarter of this month or the *astakā* which fell on the 13th Dec , 648 A D , the moon was conjoined with *Citrā* or *a Virginis*, in the latter part of the night

On this day, at G M N , we had—

Mean Sun	$=264^\circ\ 57'\ 0''\ 47$,	Hence—
,, Moon	$=180^\circ\ 14'\ 22''\ 10$,	Apparent Sun $=265^\circ\ 8'$
Lunar Perigee	$=188^\circ\ 32'\ 34''\ 17$,	,, Moon $=179^\circ\ 10'$,
Sun's Apogee	$=\ 79^\circ\ 46'\ 40''\ 79$	Long of *a Virginis* $=185^\circ$ nearly
$2e=118'\ 7$, $\frac{5}{4}e^2=1'\ 398$		

From these calculations it follows that the last lunar month of the year, was the second *Agrahāyana* as this month completed the luni-solar cycle of 331 years

The date of the inscription, being the second day of the second *Āgrahāyana*, was *the 22nd of November, 648 A D* With this second *Agrahāyana* which ended on the 20th Dec ,

[2] Length of Solar *Agrahāyana*$=29da\ 30n\ 24v\ 2^{iii}\ 33^{iv}$ (Burgess—*S Siddhānta*, xiv, 3)

Length of Lunar month $=29da\ 31n\ 50v\ 6^{iii}\ 53^{iv}$ (acc to the *Khandakhādyaka*).

648 A D, the year 330 of the Gupta era ended *It must be admitted that the inscription as it has been read or as it was executed was slightly defective In this case also Āryabhata I's Caitra-Śuklādi reckoning is not followed*

Here *330 of the Gupta era = 619 A D.*
Zero of the „ „ = 319 A D

V *Morvi Copper Plate Inscription*

पञ्चाशीत्यायुतेऽतीते समाना शतपञ्चके ।
गौप्ते ददावदोनृपः सोपरागेऽर्कमण्डले ॥
सवत् ५८५ फाल्गुन सुदि ५ ।

This inscription says that on the day of the 5th *tithi* of the light half of lunar *Phālguna* of the Gupta year 585, the king of the place Morvi (22° 49′ N and 70° 53′ E) made a gift at the time of a solar eclipse, which happened some time before this date, on which the deed of gift, *viz*, the copper plate in question, was executed

To find the date of this copper plate, had been a pit fall for Dr Fleet, who mistook that the solar eclipse in question happened on the 7th May, 905 A D Now the year 585 of the Gupta should be 904 A D and the date of execution of the plate should be Feb 20, 904 A D We looked for the solar eclipse, two lunations + 5 days before and 8 lunations + 5 days before this date Although there happened the two solar eclipses at these times, they were not visible in India

We find, however, that here the Gupta year is reckoned not from the light half of *Pausa*, but from the light half of *Caitra* according to Āryabhata I's rule Here the year 585 of the Gupta era = 826 of the *Caitra-Suklādi* Saka era = 904-905 A D, or the Zero year of the Gupta era = 319-20 A D the date of the inscription corresponds to March 3, 1941 A D, and the elapsed years till this date = 1036 years = 12814 lunations = 378405 days The date of the copper plate works out to have been *Feb 12, 905 A D* The eclipse referred to in the inscription happened on

[1] Finally accepted by Fleet — Indian Antiquary, Nov, 1891, page 382 S B Dikṣita did actually find it

Nov 10, 904 A D.,[1] on which, at G M N or 4-44 p m Morvi time,

Mean Sun	=234° 22′ 29″ 31,
Sun's Apogee	= 83° 9′ 18″ 32,
Mean Moon	=231° 7′ 21″ 80,
D Node	=246° 7′ 31″ 10,
Lunar Perigee	=162° 10′ 10″ 68

The new-moon happened at mean noon Morvi time, the magnitude of the eclipse as visible at the place was about 075 The beginning of the eclipse took place at 11-35 a m Morvi time, the end came about 12-45 noon Morvi mean time Duration was about 1 hr 10 min [1]

Secondly, if we use the *Khandakhādyaka* constants, the *ahargana* becomes for 826 of Saka era+8 lunations=87528 Hence the mean places with Lalla's corrections thereto, at G M N at the same day, become —

Mean Sun	=228° 18′ 5″,
,, Moon	=224° 27′ 36″,
D Node	=239° 44′ 56″,
Lunar Perigee	=155° 59′ 47″

It appears that this eclipse could be predicted by the method of the *Khandakhādyaka* The gift made by this copper plate was probably a reward to the calculator of the eclipse

VI The Sixth Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

षट्पञ्चाशोत्तरेऽब्दशते (१५६) गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ महावैशाखसंवत्सरे कार्त्तिक मास शुक्लपक्षतृतीयायां । [2]

In the year 156 of the Guptas, which was the Jovial year styled the *Mahā vaiśākha* year, the inscription records the date as the day of the 3rd *tithi* of the light half of *Kārtika*

Now 156 of the Gupta era	=475 A D
Julian days on Jan 1, 475 A D	=1894552, and
,, ,, ,, ,, ,, 1900 A D	=2415021

The difference is 520469 days which comprise 14 24 Julian centuries+253 days We increase 520469 days by 12 25 days and

[1] The above circumstances of the eclipse have been calculated by my collaborator, Mr N C Lahiri, M A

[2] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, page 104, the Khoh Grant

arrive at the date, Dec 20, 474 A D , on which, at G M T 6 hrs or 11-4 a m Ujjayinī M T ,

Mean Jupiter $=170° \ 54' \ 6'' \ 57$,

Mean Sun $=269° \ 47' \ 11'' \ 66$

Hence we calculate that mean Jupiter and mean Sun became nearly equal 289 days later i e , on the 17th September, 475 A D , at 6 a m G M.T ,

Mean Jupiter $= 194° \ 55' \ 31'' \ 42$,

Mean Sun $= 194° \ 38' \ 19'' \ 15$

It is thus seen that the mean places would become almost equal in 6 hrs more For the above mean places, however, the equations of apsis for Jupiter and Sun were respectively $-2° \ 6' \ 4'' \ 01$ and $-1° \ 45' \ 2'' \ 70$ Hence their apparent places became as follows —

Appt Jupiter $= 192° \ 49' \ 30'' \ 41$,

,, Sun $= 192° \ 53' \ 16'' \ 45$

Thus they were very nearly in conjunction at 6 hrs G M T on the 17th September, 475 A D

According to Brahmagupta, Jupiter rises on the east on getting at the anomaly of conjunction of 14° This takes place in 15 5 days Hence the date for the heliacal rising of Jupiter becomes the 2nd October, 475 A D , at G M T 18 hrs , when—

Appt Sun $=208° \ 45'$, and

,, Jupiter $=196° \ 20'$ nearly

Thus Jupiter was heliacally visible about Oct 20, 475 A D The actual date of the inscription was **Oct 18, 475 A D**

Here on the day of the heliacal visibility, the sun was in the *nakṣatra Viśākhā*, but Jupiter was 3° 40′ behind the first point of the *nakṣatra* division, the Vernal Equinox of the year being taken as the first point of the Hindu sphere According to the rule of naming Jupiter's years as given in the modern *Sūrya Siddhānta*, XIV, 16-17, it was sun's *nakṣatra*, on the new-moon prior to October 18, 475 A.D the date of the

inscription, which took place on Oct 15-16 of the year, gave the name of the year The sun would reach the *nakṣatra Anurādha*, and the year begun was consequently *Mahā vaiśākha* year of Jupiter

This inscription also shows that the Gupta era began from 319 A D

VII The Seventh Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

त्रिषष्ट्युत्तरेऽब्दशते (१६३) गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ महाआश्वयुज संवत्सरे चैत्रमास शुक्ल-पक्ष द्वितीयायाम् । [1]

The inscription records the date as the year 163 of the Gupta kings, the Jovial year called *Mahā Āśvayuja*, the day of the 2nd *tithi* of the light half of *Caitra*

The year 163 of the Gupta era or 482 A D was similar to the year 1941 A D, and the date to March 30, 1941 A D In 1459 sidereal years (1941 − 482 = 1459), there are 532909 days, which are applied backward to the 30th March, 1941 A D, and we arrive at the tentative date of the inscription as March 8, 482 A D On this date, at G M N, we had—

Mean Jupiter = 29° 58′ 8″ 24,
,, Sun = 347° 12′ 47″ 11

Here, Jupiter's heliacal setting is yet to come in about 30 days Hence on April 7, 482 A D,

Mean Jupiter = 32° 27′ 46″ 22,
,, Sun = 16° 46′ 57″ 02 at G M N

Thus the heliacal setting of Jupiter took place in two days more according to Brahmagupta's rule on the 9th April, 482 A D, and the new-moon happened on the 5th April, 482 A D, when the sun was in the *nakṣatra Bharaṇi* Hence the year to come got its name *Āśvayuga* year But the tentative date of the inscription was obtained as March 8, 482 A D, which was 21 days before the new-moon on about the 5th April, 482 A D This needs elucidation

[1] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, page 110, the Khoh Grant II

Here by coming down by 30 days we arrive at the lunar month of *Vaiśākha* as it is reckoned now But in the year 482 A D , *i e* , 17 years before the year 499 A D , when the Hindu scientific *siddhāntas* came into being, the calendar formation rule was different In our gauge year 1941 A D the moon of last quarter got conjoined with *Citrā* or *a Virginis*, on the 20th Jan before sunrise Hence as pointed out before in this gauge year 1941 A D also, the lunar *Agrahāyana* of the early Gupta period ended on the 27th Jan , 1941 A D Thus the lunar month that is now called *Pausa* in 1941 A D was called *Agrahāyana* in 482 A D Hence the lunar *Caitra* of 482 A D is now the lunar *Vaiśākha* of 1941 A D

The date of this inscription is thus correctly obtained as the *7th April, 482 A D* , the Jovial year begun was a *Mahā Āśvayuja* year This instance also shows that the Zero year of the Gupta era was approximately the same as the Christian year 319 A D

VIII The Eighth Instance of Gupta Inscription Date

एकनवत्युत्तरेऽब्दशते (१९१) गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ श्रीमति प्रवर्धमान महाचैत्रसम्वत्सरे माघ मास-बहुल-पक्षतृतीयायां ।[1]

This inscription records the date, as the year 191 of the Gupta emperors, the Jovial year of *Mahā caitra*, the day of the third *tithi* of the dark half of lunar *Māgha*

We first work out the date on the hypothesis that the Gupta year was in this case also reckoned from the light half of lunar *Pausa* The Gupta year 191, on this hypothesis, would be similar to the Christian year 1931, and the date of the inscription would correspond with March 6, 1931 A D Now this Gupta year 191=510 A D , would be later than the time of Āryabhata I, *viz* , 499 A D , by 11 years

The elapsed years (sidereal) are 1421, which comprise 17576 lunations=519029 days These days are applied backward to the date, March 6, 1931 A D , and we arrive at the date Feb 12, 510 A D

[1] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, page 114, the Majhgavām Grant

On this date, Feb 12, 510 A D , at G M N , we had—

Mean Jupiter = 158° 8′ 3″ 87
,, Sun = 323° 46′ 13″ 72

We find easily the sun and Jupiter had reached equality in mean longitude in 183 5 days before, when, at G M T 0 hr ,

Mean Sun = 142° 54′ 15″ 50
Mean Jupiter = 142° 52′ 48 57

If these were the longitudes as corrected by the equations of apsis, then the heliacal visibility would come according to the rule of Brahmagupta about 15 5 days later The mean longitudes 15 5 days later become—

For Sun = 158° 10′ 54″ 21
For Jupiter = 144° 10′ 7″ 25

These, corrected by the equations of apsis, become—

For Sun = 156° 3′ 27″,
For Jupiter = 146° 16′ 41

Hence the true heliacal visibility would come in 4 days more We have here (1) gone up by 183 5 days and (2) come down by 15 5 days On the whole we have gone up by 168 days or 5 lunations +21 *tithis* Thus on the day of the heliacal visibility of Jupiter, which came in four days more, we would have to go up by 164 days=5 lunations +17 *tithis* This interval we have to apply backward to the 11th *tithi* of *Māgha*, and we arrive at the first day of *Bhādrapada* The date of the heliacal visibility would thus be Sep 1, 509 A D , and at G M N the sun's true longitude would be 160° 9′ nearly, which shows that the sun would reach the *Hastā* division On the preceding day of the new-moon, the sun would be in the *nakṣatra U Phalgunī*, and the Jovial year begun would be styled *Phālguna* or the *Mahā-phālguna year* This result does not agree with the statement of the inscription

It now appears that after the year 499 A D or Āryabhata I's time, the reckoning of the years of the Gupta era was changed from the light half of *Pausa* to the light half of *Caitra* according to Āryabhata I's rule

युगवर्ष मास दिवसाः समप्रवृत्तास्ते चैत्रशुक्लादेः ।

Kālakriyā, 11

"The yuga, year, month and the first day of the year started simultaneously from the beginning of the light half of *Caitra*."

After the year 499 A.D. all the Indian eras slowly changed their year reckoning from the winter solstice day to the next vernal equinox day, *i.e.*, the year beginning was shifted forward by 3 lunations. Hence in finding in our own time a year similar to the Gupta year, of times later than 499 A.D., we have sometimes to compare it to the present-day Śaka year and not to the Christian year.

Hence the year 191 of the Gupta era = the year 432 of the Śaka era. In our times the Śaka year 1853 is similar to the Gupta year 191 and the date of the inscription corresponds to Feb. 24, 1932 A.D. The number of sidereal years elapsed up to this date = 1421 = 519029 days, which applied backward lead to the date of the inscription as *Feb. 2, 511 A.D.*

The date of the heliacal rising arrived at before was Sept. 1, 509 A.D. The next heliacal rising would take place 399 days or 13.6 lunations later. The date for it works out to have been *Oct. 5, 510 A.D.*, and the sun had the longitude of 194° 24′ 51″ at G.M.N. At the preceding new moon, which followed the previous heliacal setting of Jupiter, the sun had the longitude of about 179°, and was in the *nakṣatra Citrā* or the Jovial year begun was *Caitra* or the *Mahā caitra* year, as it is styled in the inscription.

In the present case the year 191 of the Gupta emperors = 432 of the Śaka emperors = 510-11 A.D. Thus the year Zero of the Gupta emperors = 241 of the Śaka emperors = 319-20 A.D.

IX. नवोत्तरेऽब्दशतद्वये गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ श्रीमति प्रवर्धमान-विजयराज्य
महाआश्वयुज—सम्वत्सरे चैत्रशुक्लपक्षत्रयोदश्याम् ।

The year and date as given in this inscription is 209 of the Gupta era, the day of the 13th *tithi* of the light half of *Caitra*. Following the *Caitra-Śuklādi* reckoning, the corresponding date in our time is the 11th April, 1930 A.D. We have to apply 1402 sidereal years or more correctly 17341 lunations = 512090 days backward to this date of April 11, 1930 A.D. We thus arrive at the date of the inscription, *March 19, 528 A.D.*

On this day, at G M N, we had—

Mean Jupiter	=347° 37′ 23″ 09,
Mean Sun	=358° 53′ 52″ 27,
Jupiter's Perihelion	=350° 51′ 21″ 61,
Sun's Apogee	= 77° 42′ 56″,
,, Eccentricity	= 017301,
Jupiter's Eccentricity	= 016175

Hence—
Jupiter as corrected by the equation of apsis =347° 19′,
Appt Sun=358° 5′

It appears that the heliacal rising of Jupiter would happen 3 days later and the preceding new moon happened 13 days before, *i e*, on the 6th March, 528 A D

For on that date, at G M N, we had—

Mean Sun	=346° 5′ 3″ 98,
,, Moon	=343° 5′ 27″ 90,
Lunar Perigee	=313° 57′ 36″ 84
Sun's Apogee	= 77° 42′ 56″

Hence—
Appt Sun =319° 4′,
,, Moon=345° 43′, nearly

The new-moon happened at about 8 hours later The sun was in the *naksatra Revati*, and the Jovial year begun was *Āśvayuga* or the *Mahā Āśvayuja* year as the inscription says

Here the year 209 of the Gupta era=528 A D =year 450 of Saka era
the Zero year of the Gupta era =319 A D =year 241 of Saka era

X *The Tenth Instance of Gupta Inscription Date*

The Nepal Inscription

सवत् ३८६ जेयष्ठ मास शुक्लपक्ष प्रतिपदि रोहिणी नक्षत्रयुक्ते मुहूर्त्ते प्रशस्तेऽभिजिति ।[1]

Here the date is stated to have been, 386 of the (Gupta) era, the day of the first *tithi* of lunar *Jyaistha*, the moon was in the *naksatra* division *Rohinī* and the 8th part (*muhurta*) of the day

The equivalent years are 627 of Saka era = 705 A D, we readily see that the corresponding day in our own time was, May 20, 1939 We arrive at the date, April 30, 705 A D

(1)

Now on April 30, 705 A D, at G M T 0 hr,

Mean Sun	= 40° 54′ 10″ 97,
,, Moon	= 62° 0′ 9″ 07,
Lunar Perigee	= 322° 39′ 15″ 02

(2)

On April 29, 705 A D, at G M T 0 hr,

Mean Sun	= 39° 55′ 2″ 64,
Mean Moon	= 48° 49′ 34″ 04,
L Perigee	= 322° 32′ 33″ 97

[1] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, page 95, This inscription does not present any peculiar feature

Thus on April 29, 705 A D, at G M T 0 hr,

Apparent Sun = 41° 12′
,, Moon = 53° 50′

Hence on this day, at the stated hour, the first *tithi* was over, we have to deduct about 3° 3′ from these longitudes (mean) to allow for the shifting of the equinoxes from 499 A D The date of the inscription is thus *April 28, 705 A D*

According to the *Khandakhādyaka* calculations the *ahargana* at the midnight (mean) of Ujjayinī of April 28 = 14617 In order to have the mean places at the G M T 0 hr of 29th April, we have to take the *ahargana* = 14617 days + 5 hrs and 4 min The mean places are—

Mean Sun = 36° 52′ 12″,	Hence—
Mean Moon = 15° 13′ 58″,	Apparent Sun = 38° 16′.23″,
Sun's Apogee = 77° 0′ 0″,	,, Moon = 50° 44′ 30″
Lunar Perigee = 318° 56′ 2″	

Note —To the *Khandakhādyaka* mean places, we have applied Lalla's corrections which are well-known in Hindu Astronomy,

Hence on the 29th April at G M T 0 hr = 5-4 a m of Ujjayinī mean time, the first *tithi* was over, the sun was in the *naksatra Krttikā* and the moon in the *naksatra* division *Rohinī*, which extends from 40° to 53° 20′ of the Hindu longitudes The date of the inscription was the previous day, the **28th April, 705 A D**, as has been shown before

Now Gupta year, 386 = Śaka year 627 = 705 A D

Gupta year, Zero = Śaka year 241 = 319 A D

XI The Eleventh Example of Gupta Inscription Date

सवत्सर १०० ९० ९ (१९९) महामार्गवर्षे कार्त्तिक १० [1]

The date of the inscription is the Gupta year 199, the *Mahā-mārga* Jovial year, the day of the 10th *tithi* of lunar *Kārtika*, which corresponds to Nov 21 of 1939 A D of our times The elapsed sidereal years to this date = 1421 = 17576 lunations = 519029 days

[1] *Epigraphica Indica*, Vol, VIII, pp 284 *et seq*

Hence the date of the Inscription was **Oct 29, 518 A D**
On this date, at G M N ,

Mean Jupiter = 62° 34′ 9″ 59,
,, Sun = 219° 6′ 50″ 17,
,, Moon = 332° 32′ 20″ 47,

Now 169 days before Oct 29, 518 A D , the true longitudes were on May 13, at U M T 6 hrs , for—

Jupiter = 53° 5′ 16″,
Sun = 52° 55′ 15″,

and these are practically equal Hence according to Brahmagupta's rule Jupiter should rise heliacally 15 5 days later, *i e* , on May 29, 518 A D But on May 21 518 A D , the mean sun had, at G M N , the longitude of 63° 22′ 54″ and the mean moon at the same hour, the longitude of 50° 40′ 6″ Thus the new-moon came on the day following, the sun having a small positive equation The new-moon-sun was in the *naksatra* division *Mrgaśiras* (53° 23′ to 66° 40′ of longitude), and the Jovial year begun was *Mārga* or the *Mahā-mārga* year as the inscription says

Thus the Gupta year, 199 = 518 A D
Gupta year, Zero = 319 A D

XII Twelfth Instance of Gupta Inscription Date *

Epigraphica Indica, Vol 21, Plate No 67—The Navagram Grant of Mahārāja Hastin

नमो महादेवाय । स्वस्ति अष्टनवोत्तरेऽब्दशते गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्तौ श्रीमति प्रवर्द्धमाने महा-आश्वयुजसम्वत्सरे ।

The year 198 of the Gupta era or 517 A D , is called *Mahā-āśvayuja* year We find that on April 7, 517 A D , at U M T 6 hrs ,

Mean Sun = 16° 51′ 25″ 67,
,, Moon = 15° 55′ 0″ 42,
Lunar Perigee = 230° 1′ 30″ 70,
A Node = 2° 58′ 20″ 27,
Mean Jupiter = 14° 58′ 46″ 35

[1] Kielhorn's approximate date was 518 A D , Oct 15 or September 15—*Epigraphica Indica*, Vol VIII, page 290

* Communicated by Prof D R Bhandarkar

This was the day of the new-moon with Jupiter at the position very near to conjunction and consequently of heliacal setting The new-moon happened in the *nakṣatra Bharani* Hence the year is called the *Mahā-āśvayuja* year

Here also the Gupta year, Zero=319 A D

Conclusion

We have here proved, from 12 or 11 concrete statements found in the inscriptions, which have used either the Gupta or the Valabhī era, that—

(1) The Gupta and Valabhī eras were but one and the same era

(2) It was most probable that the era in question had been originally started by the Gupta emperors and was given new name by the Valabhī princes who were vassals of the Gupta emperors [1]

(3) The date from which the Gupta era was started was Dec 20, 318 A D, when began the Zero year of the era from the day of the winter solstice.

(4) That the Gupta era agrees with the Christian era from 319 A D. till about 499 A D, the date of Āryabhata I, up to which the year reckoning began from the light half of *Pausa*

(5) From some year which was different for different localities after 499 A D, the beginning of the year was shifted forward from the light half *Pausa* or the Winter Solstice day to the light half of *Caitra*, conformably to Āryabhata I's dictum of beginning the year from the Vernal Equinox day This produced, in Indian calendars, "a year of confusion," as it is called in calendar reform One year of the Gupta era and 420 of the Śaka era were thus reckoned as consisting of 15 or 16 lunations This is evident from the inscriptions dealt with as Nos V, VIII, X and XI This change has been noticed in the inscriptions of those localities where Āryabhata I's reputation as the foremost Indian astronomer had been unquestionably accepted In such cases the Gupta years correspond more

[1] Fleet—Gupta Inscriptions, Plate No 18, the Mandasor Stone Inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman discussed in Chapter XXIV on the *Samvat* era

mably to the *Caitra-Śuklādi* Śaka years and that the Zero f the Gupta emperors is taken as the Śaka year 241 (*Caitra-di*) which is the same as the Christian year 319-20 A D

 sum up The Zero year of the Gupta era was originally me as the year 319 A D , and in times later than 499 A D Zero year was in some cases taken as equivalent to) A D Further the Gupta and Valabhī eras were the era It is hoped that further speculations as to this era be considered inadmissible

CHAPTER XXVI

TIME-INDICATIONS IN KĀLIDĀSA

As to the date of Kālidāsa, the greatest of our Sanskrit poets, most divergent views have been held by different researchers According to Maxmuller, Fergusson and H P Sāstrī, Kālidāsa lived about the middle of the sixth century A D On the other hand, Macdonell, Vincent Smith and A B Keith have held that the poet flourished about the time of the Gupta Emperor Chandragupta, II, the first Indian monarch who, on epigraphic evidence, is known to have assumed the title of Vikramāditya (*ca* 380-415 A D) This is of course on the assumption that Kālidāsa adorned the court of a king named Vikramāditya of Ujjayinī, a tradition which appears to be of very doubtful value Then again Prof S Ray,[1] Sten Konow, Chatterjee and other Sanskritists of the old school have identified the now known Vikrama Samvat, with the era alleged to have been started by Vikramāditya of Ujjyainī and have tried to assign to the poet the first century B C But epigraphic and other evidences are, so far as I am aware, against this identification, as the original name of this Samvat era was 'Mālavābda' or even Krta era We do not yet know when the original name of the era was changed into Samvat era

As no definite epigraphic evidence about the date of Kālidāsa is forthcoming, such differences of opinion are quite natural, and any attempt to throw fresh light on the problem from a new point of view will probably be welcomed by scholars

In this chapter we have tried to show that the great poet was thoroughly conversant with the Hindu *Siddhāntic* (scientific) astronomical literature, such references being found scattered throughout his poetical and dramatical works These references have not been, as we shall see, correctly interpreted by his many

[1] Prof S Ray's paper, 'Age of Kālidāsa, *J R A S*, *Bengal*, 1908 Compare also the Allahabad University Studies, Vol 2, 1926, "On the Date of Kālidāsa" by Chatterjee

commentators including Mallinātha The reason is obvious These commentators were primarily rhetoricians and not experts in astronomy, hence they failed to get at the proper meaning of the passages and thus by their failure in this respect, have only 'darkened counsel by their words' in their commentaries We take these references one by one, we shall try to interpret them correctly and ascertain their chronological significance

(a) The first reference is—

Naksatra-tārāgraha-samkulā-pi jyotismatī candramasaiva rātrih

—Raghu, VI, 22

Here the word '*tārāgraha*' is a Hindu astronomical term not recognised by Mallinātha It means 'star-like planets,' *viz*, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn in contradistinction to the Sun and the Moon which possess discs, the Hindu scientific astronomers throughout maintain this classification (cf *Pañca-siddhāntikā*, XVIII, 61, the *Āryabhatīya*, *Gola*, 48, Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta*, VII, 1, etc) Here Mallinātha splits up the compound word as 'naksatra'+'tārā'+'graha' This sort of interpretation is apparently against the meaning of the poet

(b) That Kālidāsa was a keen observer of the first visibility of crescent is evidenced by—

(i) Netraih papus triptimanāpnuvadbhir
Navodayam nāthamivausadhīnām —Raghu, II, 73

(ii) Nidarśayāmāsa viśesadrśyam
indum navotthānamivendumatyai —Raghu, VI, 31

In these instances we have the expressions which are equivalent to 'the newly risen lord of the *osadhis*' and 'to newly risen moon'

(c) We have further in Kālidasa—

*Tisra*stri-lokīprathitena sārdhamajena mārge *vasatī*rusitvā
Tasmādapāvartata Kundineśah parvātyaye soma ivosnaraśmeh'

—Raghu, VII, 33

Here the poet says that in Aja's return journey to the city of Ayodhyā, the prince of Vidarbha (his brother-in-law), unwilling to part company of him as it were, accompanied Aja for *three nights*, just as the moon, as if unwilling to part company of the

sun at the conjunction, remains invisible for the maximum period of three nights and then separates from him This interpretation makes the figure a *pūrnopamā* or a complete similitude Hence Kālidāsa was also an observer of the fact that the moon's maximum period of invisibility lasts for three nights Mallinātha here fails to interpret the simile in Kālidāsa

(*d*) Again we have the line—

Esa cārumukhi, yogatarayā yujyate taralavimbayā Śaśī

—Kumāra, VIII, 73

'This Moon, O lovely one, is getting conjoined with the *liquid bodied*, "junction-star" of this night '

Here we have the two words '*yogatārā*' and '*taralavimbayā*', the first one means any one of the several 'stars' with which the moon gets conjoined in her 'sailing' through the sky in the course of a sidereal month Mallinātha makes a muddle of the whole thing when he says that the moon is always accompanied by a particular star in all nights (*pratyahamyayā yujyate sā yogatārā*) Again the word '*tarala-vimbayā*' means liquid-bodied, and not as Mallinātha expounds it A verse of the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, as quoted by Bhattotpala (966 A D) in the commentary on the *Brhatsamhitā* of Varāhamihira, runs thus —

Tejasām golakah sūryo grahārksānyambugolakah
Prabhāvanto hi dṛśyante sūryaraśmividīpitāh

—Brhatsamhitā, IV

(first cited by Dīksita, in his work *Bhāratīya Jyotihśāstra*, p 179)

'The sun is a sphere of energy, the planets and stars are spheres of *water*, they are seen shining by being illumined by the rays of the sun '

This evidence shows that the poet had studied the *Sūrya Siddhānta* as known to Bhattotpala, and used the word '*tārala-vimbayā*' in the strict *Siddhāntic* sense

(*e*) Another very important astronomical passage in Kālidāsa is—

Agastyacihnādayanāt samīpam diguttarā bhāsvati sannivṛtte
Ānandaśītāmiva vāspavṛstim himasrutim haimavatīm sasarja

—Raghu, XVI, 44

or 'when the sun neared the solstice (summer solstice) which was the place of *Canopus* North caused a flow of ice from the Himālayas which was like a delightfully cold shower of rain.'

Here also Mallinātha owing to ignorance of *Siddhāntic* astronomy fails to interpret the phrase '*Agastya cihna*' which cannot but mean the ecliptic place of *Canopus*. His meaning of the phrase is the southern solstice (the winter solstice). The poet in the very preceding stanza speaks of the advent of summer at the beginning of which the sun had already left the winter solstice four months before, and was only 60° distant from the summer solstice. The phrase in question undoubtedly means the summer solstice. As to the *Agastya's* (*Canopus's*) polar longitude and latitude the astronomical *siddhāntas* say :—

In Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* (VIII. 10) we have 'Agastyo Mithunāntagah'.

In *Pañcasiddhāntikā* (XIV. 10) we have 'Karkaṭādyā'.

From the above and other works we learn of *Canopus's* place as :-

	Polar longitude	Polar latitude
Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* ..	90°	S 80°
Pañcasiddhāntikā (550 A.D.) ..	90°	S 75° 2′
Brahmagupta (628 A.D.) .	87°	S 77°
Lalla (748 A.D.) .	87°	S 80°

From the above polar longitudes of *Canopus* it appears that both Varāha and Kālidāsa belonged to the same school of *Siddhāntic* teaching. The date of the earliest form of the Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* is most uncertain. It may even be about 500 A.D. as estimated by Burgess.[1]

(f) The poet is almost enamoured of the event of the sun's reaching the summer solstice when the tropical month of *Nabhas*, the first of the rainy season began. The poet says in *Raghu.* XVIII. 6 —

> Nabhaścarairgītayaśāḥ sa lebhe
> nabhastalaśyāmatanuṁ tanūjam
> Khyātaṁ nabhaḥśabdamayena nāmnā
> kāntaṁ nabhomāsamiva prajānām

[1] If it was recast first into the modern form by Lāṭadeva (427 Śaka year or 505 A.D.) as recorded by Alberuni (*In.* Vol I, XIV, p. 1) the date may go up to, say, about 510 A.D. and not earlier.

'The king (Nala), whose fame was sung by the denizens of the sky, got a son of the same colour as the sky who became known by the name of *Nabhas* and was to his people, as pleasing as the month of *Nabhas*, the first of the rainy season.

(*g*) Kālidāsa has again in *Raghu*, XI, 36—

Tau videhanagarīnivāsinām gām gatāviva divah punarvasū
Manyate-sma pivatām vilocanaih paksmapātamapi
vañcanām manah

'The princes, Rāma and Laksmaṇa, as they stood before the people of the city of Videha, appeared as charming as the two stars *Castor* and *Pollux* of the *naksatra Punarvasu*. As they drank with their eyes the beautiful forms of the princes, their mind took it a disappointment that their tired eyelids fell preventing a continuous vision.'

To the poet why the stars *Castor* and *Pollux* were so charming, was that the sun reached the summer solstice at a place near to them, and the bursting of the monsoons took place. In the annual course, the star *Castor*'s place is first reached by the sun. We shall not, therefore, be very wrong to assume that the poet indicates that the summer solstice of his time lay very near to the place of this star. The time when the summer solstitial colure passed through it was 546 A.D. It remains yet to be examined how far it indicates the date of the poet. Enough has been shown to establish, I trust, that Kālidāsa was well trained in the *Siddhāntic* astronomy of this time, was himself a keen observer of the heavens and specially of the moon's motion amongst the ecliptic stars. We now proceed to consider the other time-references in Kālidāsa's works.

Other Time-References in Kālidāsa

The first of these time-indications is derived from the *Meghadūta*. The stanzas in Part I, 1-4, say that the exiled Yaksa addressed the cloud messenger on the first or last day of *Āsādha*; '*prathama*' and '*praśama*' are the two variants of the text. In the edition of the *Meghadūta* by Hultzsch, the commentator Vallabhadeva accepts the reading *praśamadivase* and discards

the other, and Mallinātha on the other hand accepts the reading *prathamadivase* and rejects the other. We have to settle which is the correct reading. We learn from Part II, verse 49, that the Yaksa's period of exile would end in four months more, when Visṇu would arise from his bed of the serpent Śesa ('Śāpānto me bhujagaśayanādutthite śārngapāṇau, śesānmāsān gamaya caturo, etc.'). The date for this last event being the day of the 11th *tithi* of lunar *Kārttika*, four lunations before it was the day of the 11th *tithi* of lunar *Āsādha*. Hence the day on which the Yaksa is said to have addressed the cloud messenger was that of the 11th *tithi* of lunar *Āsādha*. As this day can never be the first or the last day of the lunar *Āsādha*, and as this day can never fall on the first day of solar *Āsādha*, the real reading of the text is '*Praśamadivase*' and not '*Prathamadivase*,' the month being the solar, and never the lunar, *Āsādha*. Thus the day on which the Yaksa is made to address the cloud messenger was—

(1) The day of the 11th *tithi* of lunar *Āsādha*.

(2) The last day of solar *Āsādha*.

(3) The day of the summer solstice, as this was the day for the bursting of the summer monsoons marked by the first appearance of clouds. Here Kālidāsa says 'that a huge mass of the first-rain clouds hanging from the side of the hill looking like a fully developed elephant, burying its tusks on the hill side,' 'meghamāślista-sānum vaprakrīdā-parinata-gaja-preksaṇīyam dadarśa,' as the poet has it. The next day itself was the first day of *Nabhas*, the first month of the rainy season. The poet says that this month was imminent or 'pratyāsanne Nabhasi' when the Yaksa addressed the cloud. With the learned Sanskrit authors, the summer solstice day was the true day for the bursting of the monsoons. On this point *cf.* the *Rāmāyana*, II, Ch. 63, St. 14-16.

The poet here in the *Meghadūta* has recorded a notable astronomical event of his time. We have already seen that he has indicated the position of the summer solstitial colure

as almost passing through the star *Castor*, that this time was about 546 A D Now examining the period from 541 to 571 A D we find that the day on which the three conditions tabled above were satisfied was —

The 20th June, 541 A D , on which, at G M Noon or the Ujjayinī mean time, 5—1 p m

		Khandakhādyaka	Moderns
True Moon	=	226° 1′	227° 2′
True Sun	=	89° 38′	90° 0′

Note —The *Khandakhādyaka* is an astronomical compendium by Brahmagupta dated 665 A D , in which he sets forth the *ārdharātrika* system of astronomy as taught by Āryabhata I Varāha, in his *Sūryasiddhānta*, has borrowed wholesale from Āryabhata I, but without mentioning in any way the source he is a borrower from [1] There are indeed only two systems of the Hindu *Siddhāntic* astronomy, the *ārdharātrika* and the *audayika* To the former class belongs also the Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta*, to the other class fall the *Āryabhatīya*, the *Brāhmasphuta-siddhānta* of Brahmagupta (628 A D), the *Śisyadhīvrddhida* of Lalla (748 A D), the *Siddhāntaśekhara* of Śrīpati and the *Siddhāntaśiromani* of Bhāskara I

Here, according to the *Khandakhadyaka*, Moon—Sun=136°23′, the eleventh *tithi* was over about nine hours before, *i e* , at about 8 a m in the morning, and the first day of *Nabhas* was the next day, and that this date of June 20, 541 A D , was the true last day of the solar *Āsādha* The sun's longitude according to the modern constants shows the day as the true day of the summer solstice of the year This reference thus indicates the time of Kālidāsa as about 541 A D , which is not very different from 546 A D obtained before

The second of these time-indications is derived from our poet's drama, *Abhijñānaśakuntala*, VII, 91 Here Kālidāsa employs

[1] P C Sengupta, Translation of the *Khandakhādyaka*, the introduction, Calcutta University Press, 1931 A D

an astronomical simile to describe the final union of Dusyanta with Sakuntalā The prince thus speaks to his consort —

> Priye, Smritibhinnamohatamaso
> Distyā pramukhe sthitāsi sumukhi
> Uparāgānte śaśinā
> Samupagatā Rohinī yogam

'It is by a piece of good luck, my lovely darling, that you stand before me whose gloom of delusion has been broken by a return of memory. This has been, as it were, the star *Rohini* has got conjoined with the moon at the end of a total eclipse'

So far as we can see, our poet again uses another specially noticeable astronomical event of his time for a simile A total eclipse of the moon happened according to Oppolzer's *Cannon der Finsternesse* on November 8, 542 A D, with the middle of the eclipse at 17 hours 5 minutes of G M T or the Ujjayinī mean time 22 hours 9 minutes the half durations for the whole eclipse and the totality were 112 minutes and 51 minutes respectively As to the magnitude and the half durations, I trust, Oppolzer s book is correct, although not based on the most up-to-date astronomical constants The authorities for his longitudes were Leverrier and Hansen, thus the beginnings and ends are not very correct as set forth below —

On November 8, 542 A D, at 17 hours 5 minutes, G M T, we have—

	Newcomb and Brown	Leverrier and Hansen
Apparent Sun	228° 28′ 49″	228° 28′ 46″
Apparent Moon [1]	48° 16′ 41″ [1]	48° 26′ 3″ [1]

Thus according to the most up-to-date authorities, Moon ~ Sun = 12′ 8″, while according to Oppolzer's authorities the same = 2′ 43″ The difference of 9′ 25″ would be gained by the moon in 19 minutes more Consequently the beginnings, the middle and the ends have to be shifted forward by 19 minutes *The eclipse thus began most conveniently at 8-36 p m. and ended at 0 hour 20 minutes a m of the Ujjayinī mean time on November 9, at a very favourable time for the observation*

[1] Corrected by 12 principal equations

of the conjunction of the moon with the star Rohiṇī (Aldebaran), and at this instant—

Apparent moon	49° 31′ 10″
Longitude of *Rohiṇī* (*Aldebaran*)	49° 30′ 11″
Latitude of *Rohiṇī* (*Aldebaran*)	−5° 28′ 17″

The moon at the end of the eclipse had almost complete equality in longitude with the star *Aldebaran* or *Rohiṇī*, as could be estimated by producing the line of the moon's cusps formed at the eclipse some time before its end

The date of this peculiar lunar eclipse, *viz* , 8-9 Nov , 542 A D confirms the dates 546 A D and 541 A D as obtained before The period in which Kālidāsa in all probability observed these three astronomical events, which he has recorded in his work in his own way, runs from 541 to 546 A D The events thus tend to place Kālidāsa in the middle of the sixth century A D

In the previous reference (from the *Meghaduta*) we have shown before, that in the phrase '*Āsādhasya praśamadivase*,' the word '*Āsādha*' is to be taken in the sense of the 'solar' and not of the 'lunar' month of *Āsādha*

This interpretation makes the date of the poet later than the date of the starting of the Hindu *Siddhāntic* astronomy I have not as yet come across any mention of solar months in Indian epigraphy That the Hindu *siddhāntas* date from that epoch at which the planetary mean places (or even apparent places) are almost all equal to the tropical mean longitudes as calculated from the most modern astronomical constants, is the sole test by which it can be ascertained Āryabhaṭa I indeed makes his epoch 3,600 years after the Kali epoch of 3102 B C , Feb 17, 24 hours or February 18, 6 hours of Ujjayinī mean time The date and hour we arrive at is—

March 21, 499 A D , Ujjayinī mean midday The mean longitudes are shown in the following table[1] —

[1] Compare also the Table on page 38

Planet (1)	Ārdharātrika system (2)	Audayika system (3)	Mod S, Siddhānta (4)[2]	Mean Trop longitudes Moderns (5)	Error in Ārdharātrika (6)	Errors in Audayika (7)
Sun	0° 0′ 0″	0° 0′ 0″	0° 0′ 0″	359° 42′ 5″	+17′ 55′	+17′ 55
Moon	280° 48′ 0″	280° 18′ 8″	280° 48′ 0	280° 21′ 52″	+23 8	+23 8
L A Node	352° 12′ 0′	352° 12 0	318° 20′ 0″	352° 2′ 26″	+9 31′	9 11′
L Apogee	35° 12′ 0′	35° 42′ 0	31° 56 13″	35° 21′ 38	+17′ 22	+17′ 22′
Mercury	180° 0 0″	186° 0′ 0″	198° 7 18′	138° 9′ 51′	−189 51′	+170 9
Venus	356° 21′ 0″	356° 21 0′	352° 18 0′	356° 7′ 51′	+16 9	+16 9′
Mars	7° 12 0′	7° 12′ 0″	9° 48 0′	6° 52 15′	+12 15′	+19′ 15′
Jupiter	186° 0 0″	187° 12′ 0′	186° 0 3′	187° 10 16	−10 17″	+1′ 12
Saturn	49° 12 0″	49° 12 0′	50° 21′ 0	48° 21′ 13′	−50 47	+50 47′

The mean 'planets' of the *ārdharātrika* system are the same as taught by Varāha in his so-called *Sūryasiddhānta* The date of the Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* as judged by a similar test is put at 1091 A D by Bentley, which cannot be set aside as unacceptable (Calcutta University reprint of Burgess's translation, page 24) The reader may on this point compare Dīksita's work, the *Bhāratīya Jyotihśāstra*, page 200, 1st edn, and also my article, 'Hindu Astronomy' in the journal *Science and Culture* for June, 1941

The planetary position as in cols (2), (3) and (5) are in general agreement, excepting in that of Mercury, where the error is respectively −3° and +3° nearly in the above two systems The next great difference of +51′ occurs in the mean place of Saturn, in almost all other cases the Hindu mean places (or more correctly Āryabhata's) are almost the same as calculated from the most modern constants Hence there should not be any doubt as to the date from which the *Siddhāntic* calculations were started—that date must be March 21, 499, A D The Hindu rule for calculating what is called *Ayanāmśa*, or the

[2] The Modern *Sūrya Siddhānta* longitudes are for 12 hours 33 6 minutes of U M Time

distance of the 1st point of the Hindu sphere from the vernal equinox of date, also accepts this as the date when the two points were coincident There is another date also, *viz*, 444 of Śaka era or 522 A D, called the Bhata year, from which also the *Ayanāmśa* is calculated Thus we conclude that as Kālidāsa means the solar month of *Āsādha* in the phrase '*Āsādhasya praśamadivase*,' his date cannot be earlier than 499 A D, or even 522 A D It was from about these dates that the Hindu signs of the zodiac were formed and solar months for the different signs of the zodiac came to be calculated in the Hindu calendar, in the form of transits of the sun from one sign of the zodiac to the next

As to the date of Kālidāsa, we have, as set forth above, the first time-indication in which he hints that the summer solstitial colure of his time passed almost straight through the star *Castor*, for which the date has been worked out as 546 A D Secondly, the astronomical event of the combination of the last day of solar *Āsādha*, the day of the 11th *tithi* of lunar *Āsādha* and the day of the summer solstice falling on the same day has given us the date 541 A D, June 20 Thirdly, the date of the total lunar eclipse, which was most favourable for the observation of the moon, being conjoined with the star *Rohini* (*Aldebaran*) at its end, has led to the date Nov 8—9, 542 A D, so closely converging to the preceding dates All these findings finally fix the date of the greatest of the Sanskrit poets at about the middle of the sixth century A D We have also shown that as the date of all the extant Hindu scientific *siddhāntas* cannot be earlier than 499 A D, March 21, and that it may even be later than 522 A D, the date of Kālidāsa cannot but be about 541-546 A D, as he uses the phrase '*Āsādhasya praśamadivase*,' which cannot but mean the last date of the solar month of *Āsādha* Even by the learned ancients such an expression, indicating the use of a solar month, was not possible before the time of Āryabhata I, so far as I have come to learn from my study of Hindu astronomy for more than three decades Before 499 A D this science was in the *amorphous state* The Jyotiṣa Vedāmga calendar has a tradition

that the five-yearly Vedic calendar was started from about 1400 B C , but we have evidence to show that this calculation was never extended beyond five years The late Mr S B Dīksita, in his *Bhāratīya Jyotiḥśāstra*, page 125, has quoted a verse from the *Mahābhārata*, *Śānti*, Ch 301, 46-47, in which we find that the calendar-makers or the wise men found 'omitted years, months, half lunations and even days' in trying to follow the five-yearly luni-solar cycle It is a pity that nothing is on record to show when arose occasions for such adjustments being made and how these wise men failed to find the 19 years or the 141 years as the more correct luni-solar cycles by these processes In these calculations there was no use of the signs of the zodiac and of no other planets except the sun and the moon When Kālidāsa uses the solar month, we have an indication of the existence of *crystalline state* of Hindu astronomy

Date	Ujjainī Mean Time hr	Tropical longitude of the sun Moderns	The same referred to the M V Equinox of March 21, 199 A D	Khanda Khadyaka [1] True Sun	Khanda khādyaka True Moon	Current tithi	Summer Solstice on
188 A D , June 23	6 a m	89° 50 38'	3 1° 9 7'	3 5°12 16			The 6th of solar Śrāvana
302 A D , June 22	,,	89° 19 10"	3 2°27'52	3°3° 33 18'			The 4th of solar Śrāvana
416 A D , June 21	,,	89° 41' 12	3° 0° 53'31"	3°1°26'26			The 2nd of solar Śrāvana
427 A D June 21	,,	89° 6'41"	3°0° 6'24'	3°0°37 19"	7 11°11'32'	11th	The 2nd of solar Śrāvana
481 A D , June 20	21 hrs	90° 2 0'	3 0°11'23	3°0° 37 23'	7 11°13 58'	11th	The last day of solar Āsadha

[1] We have followed the *Khandakhādyaka* of Brahmagupta in the calculations as no better or more reliable ancient works are known to us,

of the time of Āryabhata I, which dates from March 21, 499 A D

For finally settling this point, there should be forthcoming epigraphic evidence as to the use of the solar months by the learned Indians before the time of Āryabhata I So far as I have seen, I have not come across any earlier use of solar months in any epigraphic statements the dates are invariably stated in terms of the lunar months alone If we want to explore the possibilities of a repetition of the *Meghadūta* astronomical event in the period from 188 A D —541 A D , we find that the only previous date for its occurrence was 484 A D., as the above calculations will show

We refer the tropical longitudes of the sun to the mean vernal equinox of March 21, 499 A D , as this was the true date from which the Hindu *Siddhāntic* calculations are really started and the mean vernal equinox of the date is the true first point of the Hindu sphere

It apears from the above calculations that the date 541 A D , June 20, may be raised by the short interval of 57 years to the date 484 A D , June 20, from a pure astronomical finding taken singly There are, however, at present no good reasons even for this small shifting of the date already arrived at, as explained already It becomes quite inadmissible on a consideration of our last reference in the same way

In the list of total eclipses of the moon visible in India and happening near the star *Aldebaran* as given in Oppolzer's *Cannon der Finsternesse* during the period from 400 A D to 600 A D , we have only the following —

Date	Middle of Eclipse G M T	Half duration for whole eclipse	Half duration for totality
459 A D , October 27	14 hrs 30 mins	111 mins	50 mins
477 A D , November 6	23 hrs 21 mins	111 mins	50 mins
542 A D November 8	17 hrs 5 mins	112 mins	51 mins

As to the eclipse of date October 27, 459 A D , there cannot be any conjunction of the moon with the star *Rohiṇī* (*Aldebaran*)

at its end, as both the date and the hour are unfavourable. As regards the eclipse of November 6, 177 A.D., it would end, according to Oppolzer's *Cannon*, in the next day at the Ujjayinī mean time 6 hours 16 minutes. But as his authority for the longitude of the moon was Hansen, the end of the eclipse would have to be shifted forward by 23 minutes. Hence the end of the eclipse would be at 6 hours 39 minutes of the Ujjayinī mean time. The sunrise works out as 6 hours 27 minutes of U. M. time, *i.e.*, the eclipse did not end before the sunrise on the day in question. Kālidāsa could not possibly mean this eclipse in his simile in the *Śakuntalā*.

The peculiar lunar eclipse on 8—9 November 512 A.D., and the sun's turning south on June 20, 541 A.D., taken together thus fixes the date of Kālidāsa about the middle of the sixth century A.D., and thus leads to the conclusion that the great poet and the astronomer Varāha were contemporary. We have also pointed out already that Kālidāsa indicates that the summer solstitial colure of his time passed through the star *Castor* for which the date becomes 546 A.D.

As to Varāha's date, we know that he flourished about 550 A.D., as he mentions Āryabhata I (499 A.D.) by name and is himself mentioned by Brahmagupta (628 A.D.). Āmarāja, the commentator of the *Khandakhādyaka* of Brahmagupta, says that Varāha died in 587 A.D. Hence the two of the 'nine gems' of the tradition may be contemporary but that they all belonged to the court of the King Vikramāditya may be wholly wrong.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, the verse which records the tradition, *viz.* —

> Dhanvantari-Ksapanakāmarasimghaśamku-
> Vetālabhatta-Ghaṭakarpara-Kālidāsāh
> Khyāto Varāhamihiro nrpateh sabhāyām
> Ratnani vai Vararuci-r-nava Vikramasya,

occurs first of all in the last chapter of the astrological work named the *Jyotirvidābharana* by another *Kālidāsa*, who was an

astrologer—whose date cannot but be about 1243 A D from the following considerations —

In this work in the last chapter the author says that the epoch of his work is placed at 3,068 years of *Kali* elapsed, *i e* , 34 B C This cannot be the date of the author, as it is only the date from which the calculations are started His rule for finding the distance of the origin of the Hindu sphere from the vernal equinox shows that this was *zero* at 445 of the Śaka year elapsed, or 523 A D This also cannot be the date of this astrologer Kālidāsa If we examine his rules for finding when the sun and the moon would have numerically equal declinations except near about conjunctions and oppositions, this yields the result that at the time of this astrologer, the distance of the origin of the Hindu sphere from the vernal equinox was about 12° This makes his date about 1243 A D This was also the finding of the late MM Sudhākara Dvivedī in his Sanskrit work named *Ganaka Tarangiṇī*, page 46 This author can never be the same person as the greatest Sanskrit poet bearing the same name As to the last chapter of this astrological work Pandit Dvivedī has said —

Ayamantimādhyāyo granthakṛtā jagad-vañcanayā svayam viracito vā kenacid itihāsānabhijñena prakṣipta iti niḥsaṃśayam ayanāṃśānayana-krāntisāmyasādhanan granthasthan vibhāti

'This last chapter is either written by the author himself in order to deceive the world or that it was interpolated by a person who was ignorant of history a conclusion which follows as a necessary corollary to the rules given in the body of the work for finding the distance of the origin of the Hindu sphere from the vernal equinox of date, and for finding the numerical equality in declination of the sun and the moon excepting near about conjunctions and oppositions '

Thus any statement of the Vikramāditya tradition, if found only in the last chapter of this astrological work, cannot be taken as correct The King Vikramāditya may be a mere invention The moot point here is to explore earlier and more reliable

authors before this tradition may be accepted as true Some of the 'nine gems,' however may have been contemporary

Then again the hypothesis that the 'Vikrama' era of having been started from 57 or 58 B C is also of very questionable nature, as its original name was perhaps not 'Vikrama' era but 'Mālava' or 'Kṛta' era The reader is here referred to Chapter XXIV, pages 242-43

From the facts stated above we may take it that the old name of the era in question was the Vikrama era The traditional king Vikramāditya of Ujjayinī is in all probability a mythical person He cannot be identified with any of the Gupta emperors who assumed the title of *Vikramāditya* The now-known Samvat era can also have nothing to do with the time of Kālidāsa

As to the date of Kālidāsa, so far as we can reasonably deduce from the astronomical data in his works, it comes out as about 541-546 A D, or about the middle of the sixth century A D, and that he is a contemporary of Varāhamihira So far as I have seen, the finding in this paper would not go against any epigraphic evidence as discovered up to date

EPILOGUE

The book has come to its end but it is felt necessary to make some concluding remarks for its future critics in respect of certain points

First of all, as to Section I treating of the Date of the Bhārata Battle, it may be put forward that the *Mahābhārata* is only a great poem and as such, data derived from it cannot form any basis for finding the Date of the Bhārata Battle It may also be suggested that the *Purānas* should more properly be used for the purpose In reply to this it may be said that (1) the necessary astronomical data can be found only from the *Mahābhārata* and from no other source (2) In the *Garga Samhitā* (not yet published) there have been found more than one statement which say or indicate that the Bhārata Battle was fought at the junction of the *Kali* and *Dvāpara Yugas* Bhattotpala has quoted in his commentary on the *Brhatsamhitā*, XIII, 3[1] a verse which runs thus —

कलिद्वापरसन्धौ तु स्थितास्ते पितृदैवतम् ।
मुनयो धर्म्मनिरताः प्रजानां पालने रताः ॥

"At the junction of the *Kali* and *Dvāpara* ages, the seven *Rsis* were in the *naksatra Maghā* , they, faithful to their austerities, were the protectors of the peoples "

Again in the *Garga Samhitā* it is also said [2] that the *Mahābhārata* heroes were living at the end of the *Dvāpara* age This "junction" of *Kali* and *Dvāpara* has been shown in pp 35-42, as at January 10, 2454 B C The year in this *Mahābhārata cum Purāna Kaliyuga* had the Winter Solstitial reckoning, in contradistinction to Āryabhata's vernal equinoctial years The date of the Bhārata Battle, as determined at 2449 B C , is exactly one luni-solar cycle of five years later than the *Dvāpara-Kali junction* year of 2454 B C This is a corroboration

[1] *Loc cit* , page 15

[2] R A S Bengal, Manuscript, I D 20 (Fort Will Coll), Folio 102, 2

of our finding from the *Garga Samhitā*, which cannot be only a "poem" like the *Mahābhārata*

The *Puranic* evidences as to the Date of the Bhārata Battle are all incomplete and faulty as shown in Chapter III

The *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas* belong to the same class of literature called *Jaya* or tales of victory The following extracts from the *Mahābhārata* will bear this out —

(*a*) उवाच स महातेजा ब्रह्माणं परमेष्ठिनम् ।
कृतं मयेदं भगवन् काव्यं परमपूजितम् ॥६१॥

इतिहास-पुराणानामुन्मेषं निर्मितं च यत् ।
भूतं भव्यं भविष्यच्च त्रिविधं कालसंज्ञितम् ॥६३॥

Ādi, 1 61 & 63

(*b*) इतिहासमिमं श्रुत्वा पुरुषोऽपि सुदारुणः ।
मुच्यते सर्व्वपापेभ्यो राहुणा चन्द्रमा यथा ।
जयो नामेतिहासोऽयं श्रोतव्यो विजिगीषुणा ॥२०॥

Ādi, 62, 20

From the first extract we learn that the *Mahābhārata* contains the beginnings of the *Purānas* and *Itihāsas* (history) In the *Mahābhārata* we find that only the *Vāyu* and *Matsya Purānas* are mentioned by name The second extract says positively that the *Mahābhārata* itself is a *Jaya* or a tale of victory, and it is the earliest of this class of literature The *Purānas* are extremely faulty in their dynastic lists and the summarisers who state the interval between the birth of Parikṣit and the accession of Mahāpadma Nanda are hopelessly unreliable The *Mahābhārata* as a basis for finding the Date of the Bhārata Battle has been shown as far superior to the *Purānas*

Last of all, it may be urged that Bhīṣma as a hero in the great fight is an impossibility—that his lying on the bed of arrows for 58 nights before expiry in anticipation of the day following the winter solstice is a solar myth The orthodox Indian view is ranged against this allegation If we agree that this was a myth we should not lose sight of the fact that the real necessity for creating it lay in correctly finding the beginning of the **year One** of the Judhiṣṭhira era, of which zero year was the year of the

great battle Hence even accepting the character of Bhīsma in the fight as a solar myth, the Date of the Bhārata Battle as found remains valid In ancient times the first day of the year was the day following the winter solstice Even now Christ's birth-day is observed on the 25th December In the first century B C the 24th December was the winter solstice day, and the 25th December, was the first day of the sun's northerly course, or the birth of Christ was synchronous with the birth of the year In both cases the myths may also have been created round these great personages on the basis that a certain great astronomical event such as the beginning of the year coincided with their birth or death

In Section II on Vedic Antiquity, the heliacal rising of different stars in different seasons has been used as a basis for the determination of time In all these cases the depression of the sun below the horizon, at the time of the heliacal rising of stars, has been uniformly taken at 18° In the case of the bright stars, *e g* , *Sirius, Regulus* etc , the sun's depression should have been taken less than this amount In this connection we would say that we do not know how far accurate were the observers of those days of hoary antiquity as to the heliacal risings of stars We do not also know how far the horizon was clear in different seasons at Kuruksetra the assumed centre of Vedic culture, for such observations and what was the necessary or accepted altitude of the star above the horizon in the several cases In certain case we have admitted possible lowering of the date by a few centuries

ग्रन्थोऽयं पूर्त्तिमापन्नो बह्वायाससमुद्भवः ।
प्रीत्यै भूयाद् भगवतोर्भवानीविश्वनाथयो: ॥
शोधनीयानि कृपया यान्यत्र स्खलनानि हि ।
विपश्चिद्भिः सहृदयैर्गुणदोषविचारकैः ॥
काल-निर्णयविद्यास्मिन् ज्योतिःशास्त्रानुसारिणी ।
अनन्यमनसा तावद् यतिता विदुषां दृशे ।
प्राज्ञे सेयं स्वय यातु विस्तारं वस्तुशक्तितः ॥
माणिक्गङ्गोपभागस्थ-त्राय्राग्रामनिवासिना ।
धन्वन्तरिकुलोद्भूत-वामारामाङ्कलाञ्छित-
प्रबोधचन्द्र सेनेन कृत कालविनिर्णय ।

SOME OPINIONS ON THE RESEARCHES EMBODIED IN THE PRESENT WORK

A

(*Extract from "Nature," January 6, 1940, Vol 145, No 3662, pp 38-39*)

"SOME INDIAN ORIGINS IN THE LIGHT OF ASTRONOMICAL EVIDENCE

Among recent communications to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, several dealing with details of a technical character in palaeographical and historical studies bear upon points of interest and importance in the archaeological investigation of the origin and development of Indian civilization [1]

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Conclusions of a more surprising character, based on astronomical evidence, have been formulated by P C Sengupta in a series of papers discussing chronological and other problems in early Indian history The first of these deals with the date of the Bharata battle, the great conflict which forms the central incident of that great monument of early Indian literature, the Mahabharata The date for this battle, as usually accounted is indicated by three lines of traditional evidence at 3102-3101 B C The author, on an examination of one of these traditions, the evidence of the Yudhishthira era, has shown that the astronomical references justify the inference

[1] J R Asiatic Soc, Bengal, Letters 4, 3 (1938), issued September, 1939

[2] Cf Chapters II, III, XIII, IV and V of the present work

that the great battle took place in 2449 B C He now turns to examine the remaining two traditions, the Aryabhata and the Puranic traditions

The calculation depends upon the dating of the Kaliyuga, which the Mahabharata states had just begun and to which the date February, 3102 B C is assigned It cannot, however be reconciled with the astronomical Kaliyuga, and is shown to be based upon an astronomical calculation in which conditions are correct only for A D 499, when the Hindu scientific Siddhantas came into being It depends upon an incorrect assumption of the position of the solstices of Pandava times and an incorrect annual rate of the precession of the equinoxes A corrected back calculation from conditions in the heavens corresponding to those recorded in the Mahabharata, that is conditions in the period February 1924-35, gives a date January 10 2454 B C as the beginning of this Kaliyuga era and 2449 B C as the year of the battle

This leads to futher inquiry as to observation of the solstices in successive ages This was determined by the phases of the moon in the month of Magha, a lunar month of which the beginning at the present time may be from January 15 to February 11 In the calendar of the Vedic Hindus, this month started the five-year cycle which began "when the sun, the moon and the Dhanisthas (Delphinis) cross the heavens together, it is the beginning of the Yuga, of the month of Magha or Tapas, of the light half and of the sun's northerly course" From the astronomical conjunctions to which reference is made in the Mahabharata, it would appear that this reckoning was started (traditionally by Brahma) at about 3050 B C

There are three peculiarities of this month

(1) it began with a new-moon near Delphinis, (2) the full-moon was near Regulus, (3) the last quarter was conjoined with Antares Such a month did not come every year, but it was the standard month of Magha In our own times, it occurred in 1924 during February 5—March 5, a year which for the purpose of this investigation is taken as the gauge year

References in the Brahmanic and other works directly state or indicate the winter solstice of successive Vedic periods. From these astronomical references fixing the position of the moon in relation to the winter solstice and the beginning of the month of Magha, a matter of ritual importance in connection with the year-long and other sacrifices, it has been possible to fix by calculation back from the corresponding conditions in recent years a series of dates beginning with 3550 B.C., the earliest date of the age of the Brahmanas, and covering a period of 1450 years with a possible error of 400 years. It was thus during this period that the Brahmanic literature developed.

Next is considered Madhu-vidyā or the science of Spring, which as here interpreted is really the knowledge of the celestial signal for the coming of spring, addressed to the Aśvins, who are identified with α and β Arietis, the prominent stars in the Aśvini cluster. The three stars, α, β and γ Arietis, form a constellation which is likened to the head of a horse. The Aśvins are spoken of in several passages of the Rigveda as riding in the heavens in their triangular, three-wheeled, and spring-bearing chariot.

From certain references it would seem that when the car of the Aśvins first becomes visible at dawn, spring began at some place in the latitude of Kuruksetra in the Punjab. The jealously guarded Madhu-vidya or "science of Spring" was thus nothing but knowledge of the celestial signal of the advent of Spring—the heliacal rising of α, β and γ Arietis.

By astronomical calculation it can be shown that this event at the latitude mentioned took place at, say 4000 B.C. Hence it is beyond question that the Vedic Hindus could find accurately the beginning of winter, spring and all seasons of the year.

The earliest epigraphic evidence of Vedic chronology from cuneiform inscriptions referring to Indra and other gods of the horse riding Kharri or Mitanni dates from about 1400 B.C. In the absence of further epigraphic evidence, it is pointed out, this definite finding of the astronomical evidence derived from the literature as to the antiquity and chronology of the Vedas must

be allowed to stand It establishes, it is maintained, that the civilization of the Vedic Hindus was earlier than that of the Indus Valley as evidenced by the remains at Mahenjo-daro.

Finally, in "When Indra became Maghavan," Mr Sengupta turns to the relation of the Vedic god Indra, the "shedder of rain" and "wielder of the thunderbolt," to the summer solstice The references to this god in the Rigveda when divested of all allegory, suggest that he is the god of the summer solstice, while the clouds as represented by a demon are unwilling to yield up their watery store until assailed by the thunderbolt hurled by the god

The monsoons which bring the rains usually burst about June 22, and there is usually a drought which lasts for about a month before the monsoon comes The demon Susna (drought) is killed by Indra The fight with Vritra or Ahi, the cloud demon, is thus an annual affair which takes place when the sun enters the summer solstice Indra withdrawing his raingiving (or annual) bow with the coming of autumn

When did Indra become the slayer of Vritra? The answer given by the Rigveda is when Indra by the rising of Maghas became Maghavan Maghas to us must be the constellation Maghas consisting of α, η, γ, ζ, μ, and ϵ Leonis at the heliacal rising of which the sun reached the summer solstice at the latitude of Kuruksetra (lat 30 N) This it is shown must have happened in 4170 B C "

B

Sky and Telescope, Vol I No 5 March, 1942
Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Mass
Page 10 News and Notes

"ECLIPSE OF JULY 26, 3928 B C [1]

Astronomy has come to the aid of the historian in determining the time of the earliest known Aryan colonisation in India According to P C Sengupta (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society

[1] Cf Chapter IX of the present work.

of Bengal for August, 1941), this began about 3900 B.C. A solar eclipse, described in the Rigveda, had been observed by Atri, one of the earliest settlers in the northern Punjab. From various historical and etymological considerations, Sengupta deduces that the eclipse occurred between the years 4000 and 2400 B.C. He then lists five other conditions that must be satisfied in the determination of the actual date.

It must have been a central eclipse, taking place on the day of the Summer Solstice or the following day. It must have ended during the fourth quarter of the day at meridian of Kurukṣetra. It was observed from a cave at the foot of a snowcapped peak, either the Himalayas or the Karakoram range. Finally, at the place where Atri was, the eclipse did dot reach totality.

Among the 22 central solar eclipses that occurred near the Summer Solstice within the given time interval, there is one and only one that fulfils all of the required conditions inferred from the Rigveda. That one occurred on July 26, 3928 B.C. (Julian Calendar).

Sengupta's painstaking researches thus place the date of the first settlement of Aryans in India earlier than previous investigators believed. To most Americans, whose ancestry can be traced but a few hundred years, observations made at so early an epoch might appear to have a purely mythological value. It is a source of satisfaction to find that they conform with astronomically predictable facts."

A LETTER, DATED 25-6-'18 FROM MR. M. N. MASUD, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO EDUCATION MINISTER, INDIA, RE ANCIENT INDIAN CHRONOLOGY.

NEW DELHI,
The 25th June, 1918.

DEAR SIR,

This is in continuation of my letter, dated the 22nd of June, 1918. Maulana Saheb has now glanced through the book, "ANCIENT INDIAN CHRONOLOGY," by Mr. P. C. Sen Gupta. Maulana Saheb has already read some articles by Mr. Sen Gupta on the subject of Ancient Indian Chronology which some time back appeared in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal. He says that he has seen the book for the first time and greatly appreciates the research work which has enabled the author to fix the Mahabharat and Vedic periods. In the opinion of Maulana Saheb the present work has opened way for further researches on this subject. He thinks that after Mr. Tilak Mr. Sen Gupta's is the second effort of research into the Vedic period by means of astronomical study and the Calcutta University has, indeed, rendered a valuable service to all those who want to study the Indian History, by publishing the above book. Maulana Saheb hopes that Mr. Sen Gupta will continue the valuable work of research which he has so successfully started.

The Registrar,
University of Calcutta,
Senate House, Calcutta.

Yours faithfully,
M. N. MASUD.

ROYAL OBSERVATORY,
GREENWICH S E 10,
5th April, 1948

REF Q5 I
YOUR REF PUB 939/47

THE REGISTRAR,
CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY,
CALCUTTA, INDIA

DEAR SIR,

I have read with much interest the copy of *Ancient Indian Chronology* by Professor P C Sengupta which accompanied your letter of the 9th February

The subject of early Indian Chronology is one with which I have little familiarity and I have no knowledge of the Rigveda Nevertheless I cannot fail to be impressed by the scholarship shown by Professor Sengupta and by the skill with which he has interpreted the astronomical references in the early writings It is very appropriate that such a work should have been published by the Calcutta University Press

I shall be glad to have the volume for my library and for future reference on matters concerning early Indian Chronology

Yours faithfully,
H SPENCER JONES,

Astronomer Royal

VEDIC DATES

Ancient Indian Chronology By Prabodhchandra Sengupta (University of Calcutta Rs 15)

This book is the result of research under the auspices of Calcutta University The Vedas and post vedic classical literature are full of astronomical references which, stripped of allegory and anecdote, throw light on the remote origins of Eastern thought and civilization Prof Sengupta's approach is scientific, he uses spherical mathematics to separate fact from legend, tradition from historical evidence Naturally, his methods demand from readers more than a nodding acquaintance with both the classics and astronomy

From the astronomical data in the Mahabharata and examination of the traditions connected with it, the author fixes the date of the Bharata battle at 2449 B C, which contradicts the Aryabhata tradition He declares that the Vedic Hindus lived in India, and Kurukshetra was the centre of Vedic culture Other conclusions are that the earliest known Aryan colonization of India began about 3900 B C, the Sanskrit literature known as the Brahmanas began to be formed about 3550 B C, the Gupta and the Valabhi eras are the same, 319 A D being the zero year, and there are many other assertions, *viz*, the fixing of Sri Krishna's birthday (July 21, 2501 B C), or the date of Kalidas (541 46 A D)

Statesman, March 7, 1948

SCUP—1408B—11 5 48—425

Ancient Indian Chronology By Prabodhchandra Sengupta (University of Calcutta) Rs 15

In this book, the problem of Ancient Indian Chronology has been dealt with according to methods that are solely astronomical and thus necessarily scientific The book is divided into four sections, *viz*, (1) The date of the Bharatta battle, (2) Vedic antiquity, (3) Brahmana Chronology and (4) The Indian Eras

In section 1, the author finds the date of the Bharata battle as the year 2449 B C He bases his finding on certain lunisolar phenomena described in the battle books of the Mahabharata, The astronomical calculations carried out by the writer has shown that in the year 2449 B C, all the phenomena described did actually take place This finding about the year of the Bharata battle is confirmed by the Vriddha Garga tradition about the Yudhishthira era, and also by the calculation of the planetary positions on certain dates in the year 2449 B C, and the calculated date of Yudhishthira s consecration for the Asvamedha sacrifice The beginning of the Kali Yuga as referred to in the Mahabharata and the Puranas has been ascertained to be 2154 B C

The Vedic antiquity has been dealt with in the section 2 The superior limit to the culture of the Vedic Hindus is shown to be about 4000 B C Examination of the data relating to certain astronomical phenomena in the Vedas has shown that these events took place about the years 3500, 3250, 3050 2934 and 2154 B C The date of Vamadeva has been estimated to be 2444 B C, and that of Dirghatamas and the King Bharata of the lunar race, 2925 B C

The section 3 deals with the dates of the Brahmanas or the Vedic ritual literature The Brahmana period extends from that of the Tandya and the Jaiminiya Brahmanas, "circa" 1625 B C to the Maitri Upanishad and the Vedanga in 1800 and 1100 B C, and Baudhyana Srauta Sutra, Satapatha and Taittiriya Brahmanas in about 900 and 760 B C The time indications in the Katyayana and Apastamba Srauta Sutras correspond to about 625 B C

Some of the Indian eras have been investigated in the section 4 On consideration of the eclipses mentioned in the Samyutta Nikaya, it has been found that Gautama Buddha died about 551 B C, from which year the Nirvana era is reckoned according to the tradition amongst the Buddhists in Ceylon and Burma The zero year of the Gupta era has been determined to be 319 or 319 20 A D In the last chapter the author investigates the date of Kalidasa It has been shown that the great poet lived about the year 550 A D

The book under review contains some original astronomical methods that are applicable to the chronology of ancient events The application of these methods by the author to Ancient Indian Chronology has thrown a flood of light on the relatively unknown prehistoric and early historic periods of Hindu civilisation

This is a unique publication of outstanding merit as published up to date As a research work it will compare favourably with those of Jacobi, Tilak and Dikshit The author has done ungrudging labour entailed in corroborating his findings The researches in the present work have been thorough going This publication will be of great help to future research students in this line

Hindusthan Standard, July 25, 1948

SCUP—1408B—17-8 48

ERRATA

Page	Line	For	Read
8	Footnote, l 5	माघोऽय	माघोऽद्य
16	9	160×4	160 × 3
17	27	120° 28′ 36″	102° 28′ 36″
19	Footnote, l 3	1938	1939
24	2	date	data
31	Table cols 5 and 7	sagitter	sagttar
41	Footnote, l 6	देशास्वस्य	दैशाखस्य
45	,, l 3	*Epigraphia*	*Epigraphica*
51	25	सनेय	सनवे
64	Footnote, l 4	ऊपक्य	ऊपस
71	,, l 1	त्व	स्वा
71	,, l 2	हृहस्पति	हृहस्पति
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81	Footnote, l 7	भागमतन	भागस्तैन
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145	Footnote, l 2	कुष्ठ	कुष्ट
154	Sanskrit	स्तोना	स्तामा
154	,,	स्वरसान	स्वरसाम
158	Footnote, l 11	heir	their
172	27	*Solsticial*	*Solstitial*
204	Table, 6	−186	−885
210	8	T 756 A D	−756 A D
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210	21	762 A D	−762 A D
211	13	906 A D	−906 A D
212	17	चिपादङ्गान्	दचिणाङ्गान

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